THE

TEMPESTUOUS SOUL

CALMED

BY

Jesus Christ:

BEING

An EXTRACT of several

SERMONS

PREACHED

By *Anthony Palmer.*

The Third Edition.

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CLAIMED

BY

Lewis Clark:

BEING

AN EXTRACT of Several

SERMONS

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By Anthony Palmer.

LONDON:

To my Dear Father, Brothers, and Sisters, and other of my Beloved Kindred and Friends, &c.

THere were two Reaſons prevailed with me, for ſending forth this Treatiſe into the light; Firſt, to witneſs what the Lord (to the praiſe of his abundant grace) hath done for my own poor ſoul. Secondly, As drawn forth by tender affections and yerning bowels, I deſire more and more to put on for your immortal ſouls, which my hearts deſire is ſhould be as dear and precious to me as my own, yea, that my heart might be inflamed with that zeal of holy *Paul* Rom. 11. 14. *If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are of my fleſh and might ſave ſome of them.* In this brief Treatiſe (though chiefly pointing at the comforting a diſquieted ſpirit) yet there is laid down in the former part of it what may ſuit with your ſeveral conditions, and ſo

to ſet up a reſtleſs enquiry in your ſpirits after the Lord Jeſus, till he ſhall fill your ſouls with this bleſſed calm of his own preſence here ſhadowed forth unto you: If it ſhould be objected by any other, that I might have directed you to other Books before extant (of which, bleſſed be God, there's abundant choice; I anſwer, and, I verily believe you will with me, that the room I have in your affections will render ſomething from my ſelf (though far ſhort of the excellencies of other pieces) more grateful to you, and that you will be the more inclined to read it; Upon which account I ſend it to you, with my breathings to Heaven for the bleſſing of the Spirit of grace to be with it; and all others to whoſe hands it ſhall come, craving a candid interpretation with them: I Reſt,

Yours,

moſt affectionately

in Chriſt Jeſus,

A P.

The

THE *TEMPESTUOUS SOUL* Calmed by Jeſus Chriſt.

Matth. 8. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

And when he was entred into a Ship, his Diſciples followed him.

And behold, there aroſe a great tempeſt in the Sea, inſomuch that the Ship was covered with the waves: but he was aſleep.

And his Diſciples came to him, and awoke him, ſaying, Lord ſave us, we periſh.

And He ſaith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he aroſe and rebuked the Winds and the Sea, and there was a great calm.

But the men marvelled, ſaying, What manner of man is this that even the winds and the Sea obey him?

THE Words contain an entire work and miracle of the Lord Chriſt, ſo that we need not look for co-herence; They are uſually opened to ſet forth the preſence of the Lord Jeſus with his Church in all the tempeſts

peſts that come upon it; which (I conceive) may, without reſting, be alſo uſed to diſcover the preſence of Chriſt, calming a particular Soul in all the Tempeſts that befall it; At leaſt, by way of Allegory it will hold; as *Auſtin* ſaith, there is ſuch a ſpiritual uſe to be made of every Miracle of the Lord Chriſts.

And in this ſenſe I ſhall make uſe of them, and ſo unfold them into theſe ſix Obſervations.

1. *When Jeſus Chriſt draws in a Soul to himſelf, he uſually raiſeth a tempeſt in that Soul.* There aroſe a tempeſt, *&c.*

2. *The Soul when thus in a Tempeſt, it comes in a periſhing condition to Jeſus Chriſt:* Lord ſave us, we periſh, *&c.*

3. *Jeſus Chriſt ſeems for a time to take no notice of a Soul in ſuch a tempeſt and periſhing condition.* He was aſleep, *&c.*

4. *True Faith may be mixt with much weakneſs and fear, and yet may engage the heart of Chriſt to ſuccour;* Why are ye fearful, O ye of little Faith.

5. *A word from Chriſt can rebuke that tempeſt upon a Soul.* He rebuked the windes, *&c.*

6. *The Soul that is thus calmed is filled with the wonders of Chriſts Power and love:* They marvelled, ſaying, What manner of man is this that the winds and Sea obey him?

Theſe I ſhall open in their order.

When Chriſt draws in a Soul to himſelf, he uſually raiſeth a tempeſt in that Soul.

The word for a *Tempeſt*, in the Original is σεισμὸς, which properly ſignifies an Earthquake which cauſeth a ſhaking of the Earth; The ſame word is uſed by

by the Septuagint in *Ezekiel* frequently to ſignifie a ruſhing wind, a noiſe, a ſhaking: Now then this doth very well fit our purpoſe to diſcover this tempeſt upon a poor Soul as drawing into Chriſt, which is a kind of Earthquake, a ſhaking of an earthly heart (whoſe principles and aims were earthly) as promiſed by the Lord Chriſt, *Iſa.* 11. 4. *And he ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth,* when he comes in with a ruſhing, and a noiſe, like the voice in *Ezekiels* Viſion, *Chap.* 3. 22. when the awakenings and enlightnings of the Word and Voice of God fall in (ſhaking the ſpirit of a dead ſinner) like the noiſe of many waters; Thus when the fear of a miſcarrying Soul layes hold upon it, ſuch a kind of ſhaking and tempeſt is upon it. Now the Lord ordereth it to be thus with a Soul, for theſe Reaſons.

1. God cauſeth a glimpſe of his Holineſs to paſs by a Soul, that the Creature by ſuch a reflexion from God, may ſee in ſome meaſure what ſin hath done upon him, at what an infinite diſtance it hath ſet him at with the moſt holy God; how unlike unto him ſin hath made him; that he may in ſome meaſure ſee and feel what he is, when the great and righteous God takes him in hand, which makes him ready to cry out with *Peter* at the appearance of Chriſt to him, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man,* Luke 5. 8. And as *Moſes* in his ſelf-abaſement, when God appeared to him, *Exod.* 3. 6. *Moſes hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God:* And ver. 11. *Who am I that thou ſhouldſt ſend me?* A glimpſe of God cauſeth ſuch an abaſement upon a Soul, and even a ſhaking to be upon it, That the creature may magnifie the Greatneſs and Purity of God, and be vile in

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its own eyes before him: This is the first Reason of it.

2. He raiseth such a tempest and shaking upon a sinful worm, To cause him in part to tast what a bitter cup it was, he could so delightfully and boldly quaff off; yea, to have a taste of that bitter cup that Jesus Christ drank brim full of his Fathers wrath; that if one dram of it be so unsupportable to a soul, what were the full vials of it that were poured forth upon the sinless soul and body of Christ? that thence when we come to see him we may be pierced and be in bitterness for him, *Zach.* 12.10.

Yea 3. That a Soul may truly and in earnest feel and discern its *need* of such a Jesus to bear and deliver from that wrath; When such a glimpse of God upon it, such a shaking, such an abasement in its own vileness, such a tasting of wrath, then a Christ to quiet and calm a desolate soul is worth looking after indeed.

But it will presently be enquired, Whether every Soul is brought into Christ this way?

I will first open the height of this tempest upon a Soul, and then I will satisfie this Query. It is thus, When God musters up our sins, and sets them in order before our eyes, *Psal.* 50. 21. When he will make sin appear exceeding sinful, to be *abounding sin*; When God *writes bitter things against a Soul, and makes it to possess the iniquity of its youth*; *Job* 13. 26. I need seek no further than the 38. *Psalm*, for this tempest, and the 88. In both of them you have a discription of this tempest upon a poor creature; *Thine arrows stick fast in me, There is no rest in my bones because of my sin; Mine iniquities are gone over my head.*

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and are a burthen too heavy for me to bear; Troubled and bowed down, I go mourning all the day, filled with his terrours, as Heman: To this (as it may be conceived to have been the caſe with *David* and *Heman*, in both theſe Pſalms) is uſually added ſome ſharp affliction, either of ſickneſs, or of the imbittering ſome choiſe creature-comfort our ſpirits were inordinately let out unto, which cauſeth this ſhaking and tempeſt to be the more grievous, that we become (as *David* ſpeaks) even as broken veſſels under the mighty hand of God.

This alſo, by the ſufferance of God, is often hightned by Satans violent aſſaults, black and horrible ſuggeſtions, blaſphemous accuſations, repreſenting ſin as unpardonable, join'd with an accuſing conſcience and all our fleſhly reaſonings, that God is in a way of deſtroying and beginning of wrath here, and therefore is apt to ſuggeſt ſelf-deſtruction, ſo croſſing God's deſign, perſwading the Soul to flie from God as an Enemy, when God's main deſign is mercy, to turn it to Him.

Now then, take all theſe; the appearing of a great and holy and terrible God, ſhaking a poor earthly creature, the powerful awakenings and enlightenings of his Word, a ſenſe of his fierce wrath, the dread of a miſcarrying ſoul, the burthen of ſin, the accuſations of conſcience, the afflicting hand of God, the deſperate aſſaults of Satan, theſe like ſeveral winds make a tempeſt in the whole man, and make it to cry out, *Thy waves, O Lord, and thy billows go over my ſoul, who is able to abide thine appearance?* Theſe, like ſeveral winds meeting in a cranny of the earth, make a concuſſion and mighty ſhaking upon the

the spirit of a sinner, when the Lord thus takes him in hand.

Now to answer the question, whether every Soul be brought in to Christ such a way in the height of this tempest?

This is more than I dare assert; yet that many a poor Soul comes thus shipwrackt to Christ, thus tempestuous and forlorn, I know I need not insist to prove; This I may call the storming of a Soul, when Christ takes a Soul by his great power, suddenly breaks down all the strong holds and high things, 2 *Cor.*10.5. This is usually the way of an open sinner, though not in the same height, neither in every open sinner at his first conversion; But then sometimes Jesus Christ takes a Soul, as I may so speak, upon easier terms, brings it in, *leni afflatu*, with a more gentle gale; yet so, that in the progress of it there will be some shakings, something of this tempest upon it, though the Soul hath a glimpse of Christ, and his hand more sensibly supporting it; which I clear thus.

First, If the seed of grace be sown early in the heart (as sometimes it is) that some souls cannot remember the first work of it, yet if the Soul grow up to any measure of experience, it must be more shaken in order to its further subduing and purifying; It will meet with some kind of tempests ordinarily. I never spake with any as to this Point, but more or less did allow of it: But when the work of God is begun at some further ripeness of years, then certainly it shall meet with what I have set forth in some measure; Consider, for a Soul to be awakened out of the deep sleep of carnal security, which sin hath

hath bound him in; To have Satan the ſtrong man diſpoſeſt by a ſtronger than he; To have the guilt and filth of ſin diſcovered by the holy Spirit; To have Chriſt deſtroy the works of Satan, the power and peace of corruptions that will ſet againſt him, with all the reaſonings of fleſh and blood muſtered up; To have, in a word, the ſecure, dead, earthly, dark, hard proud, atheiſtical, unbelieving heart of an obſtinate wretch, of death to become life; of darkneſs, light; of a ſtone, fleſh; To have a grain of faith, break through all natural impoſſibilities, ſpiritual wickedneſſes, all diſcouragements within and without, when nothing within us to help forward believing, but every thing againſt us (as I ſhall further ſhew:) Though all theſe be not enough to hinder the Lord Jeſus, when he by his ſtrong arm will work, *Iſa.* 43. 13. *I will work, and who ſhall let it?* yet certainly this work is not wrought forth in a dream (as we uſe to ſpeak of things inſenſibly done) not without ſome ſhaking and concuſſion upon the Spirit, ſomething of this tempeſt udon it, partly in the beginning and partly in the progreſs of converſion; *Fides non fit ſine multo motu*, ſaith *Melanchon*, Faith is not wrought forth without much motion in the Soul; Yea, I might here ſhew, into how many tempeſts from without and within, many a poor Soul (eſpecially ſuch whom God will moſt humble and fit for ſome ſpecial ſervice) falls into; how many overwhelmings of ſpirit and guſts of temptation it is frequently ſhaken with: but I intend to keep my ſelf cut ſly to the diſcovery of the ſoul's firſt approach to Chriſt.

It may yet be further enquired, What is the loweſt meaſure of ſuch conviction, in the bringing in of

a Soul to Christ? In this there have been extreams sometimes, I presume; gracious men giving forth the tenour of their own conversion as a general rule to all others; But in this case I may safely assert, that the first work of the Spirit is to *convince of sin*, Joh. 16. 7. And that such a convincement that shall give a creature such a sight of sin, that it must appear exceeding sinful, to be *abounding sin*, Rom. 5. 18. to be tyrannizing sin, filthy sin, condemning sin, which must not only flote in the head, but convince the conscience, and affect the heart, that it must needs humble and abase a creature as he goes out of himself and rowls upon Jesus Christ; yea, he shall come in a perishing condition, as I am to shew in the next Point; If the spirit of a sinner be naturally bound up in blindness, hardness of heart, insensibleness, security, peace, then it will not make out for salvation by Christ, till the Spirit of God comes upon that blindness, &c. and so causeth the Soul to discern its own condition; and this, as the rebellions of our heart begin to be subdued by that spirit, causeth a mutiny, distemper, some kind of tempest in the whole inward man, till the Spirit draweth vertue from Jesus Christ more and more to work some measure of serenity and composure upon it, as we are to shew in the close.

3. Say some, This is a way to bring a Soul into bondage and tormenting fear. No such matter, 'Tis the way to bring him out of it: in order to the delivery from bondage, that bondage must be first discovered to and owned by the captive, which naturally he feels not, as above: To shew the captive his bondage, in order to his suing for deliverance, is the way

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for liberty. This is clear *Rom.* 8. 17. *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption*, implying, *ye are not now under the Law*, and so in bondage again, as once you were, intimating they were so, and felt themselves to be so, and that the Spirit did reveal it, and so brought them out of it, and wrought forth and witnessed Christ to them, whereby they cryed, *Abba*, Father.

4. How long is a Soul to lie in his Bondage, humbling himself? Till he cast up an eye to Jesus Christ to seek liberty in him; Certainly, though a soul is to renew his humblings under his bondage, yet not so to lie under it, but presently to make in to Jesus Christ to be freed from the guilt, condemnation, bondage, service of sin, pleading his own gracious purposes to him, as is expressed, 1 *John* 3. 8. 'twas his purpose to destroy the works of the Devil, as I will pursue in the third point.

And thus briefly I have opened what I here mean by this tempest in a poor soul, seeking Christ, and life, and peace in him, the way, and lowest measure of it.

If Jesus Christ by his Word and Spirit doth thus awaken, enlighten, convince, raise some kind of tempest in a poor soul, before it truly seeks out for life and peace in him; Let me in the first place speak to the secure peaceful soul that perswades it self it hath hope enough for heaven, good interest enough in Jesus Christ, and yet is not acquainted in any measure with such workings of the Spirit as this, coming in with an awakening voice upon the natural blindness and security, and bondage thou art bound up in.

Let me tell thee, Soul, Better were the fierceſt tempeſt upon thy ſpirit, than ſuch a calm: 'Tis ſitting with folded Arms under the ſhadow of death; 'Tis ſin in its power, bondage, peace upon thy ſpirit, the ſtrong man Satan keeping peace, that thou maiſt ſleep the ſleep of Death.

But you will ſay, What, will you diſturb the peace of my Conſcience that I have enjoyed all the days of my life?

Ah Soul, miſerable peace, miſerable calm, none of Chriſts making: Spare me a little, let me then freely beſpeak thee; *Awake thou that ſleepeſt and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light*, Eph. 5. Oh, awake from thy deadly calm and peace; *Hear the voice of the Son of God, and live*, John 5. 8. Sinner, drowſie, careleſs, heartleſs ſinner, that haſt been all thy life time ſubject to bondage, Hebr. 2. 15. Hearken, conſider, ariſe; thy ſecurity, ſafety and peace, is the death of ſin upon thy Soul: a captive in a dungeon of darkneſs, and with fetters about thee, and ſeeſt it not! this is thy temper, thou haſt been at eaſe from thy youth and ſetled on thy lees, *Jerem.* 48. 11. Thou haſt heard, the firſt work of the Spirit is to awake to Chriſt and Heaven, to hear the voice of God in thy Soul, ruſhing in upon thy ſinful peace: So *Adam* Gen. 3. when after his Sin he had thought to lie hid from God in peace covered with his fig-leaves, he heard the voice of the Lord God in the Garden, and then they were afraid, and further ſaw their own nakedneſs; What voices of God were they? *Adam, where art thou? Haſt thou eaten of the Tree I commanded thee not to eat of?* To the Woman, *What is this thou haſt done?* verſe 8, 9, 10, &c. So the

the Lord speaks to a soul at first, sometimes in an Ordinance, sometimes in a sudden voice out of it: Soul, where art thou? what is thy state and condition as to Eternity? what provision for Heaven, if thy soul should be now taken from thee? What is this thou hast done so presumptuously and peaceably to sin against thy God? to side with the Devil and the world against the peace of thy own Soul? What is this thou hast done, to neglect the care of a desolate soul? what will it profit thee to gain the whole world and lose thy own Soul, and to be a cast-away? a cast away from the holy, blessed, eternal rest of God into the company of Devils in endless unredeemable torment: What Soul, what means thy eager pursuit of Vanity, and so heartless to the things of Heaven and Eternity? With some such voyces God speaks and then the Soul is made awake for Heaven; and then it crys after God, confesseth, humbleth, bemoaneth, chargeth it self: then the Lord directs that soul to means ordinarily, whereby he will do it good, and reveal the way of life in Christ unto it; to destroy the power of Sin in it, and then, though after back-slidings and much unsetledness, and wavering, many reasonings and temptations, as shew'd, the Soul settles in some good measure in the tastings of the power and love of Christ in it, as I shall further shew; Oh that such a voice or any of these might secretly glide in the Soul of any poor Creature that hath hitherto withstood it, and might cause the deep thoughts of eternity to seize upon thee: Let me reason with thee, as in the Counsel of God, to raise a tempest in stead of that peace: fear it not, for I will shew thee a

Christ to calm all, to destroy sin, to set at Liberty to fill thy soul with joy and peace, never fear to pass through such a Tempest; better go to harbour in a storm, than perish becalmed in the sands. Why then, in thy most serious and retired thoughts by putting such Questions as I have mentioned to thy self: if thou art moved and excited by these, and such like, then this is the voice of God in them, if all that is within thee is stirred up to seek after Christ and an interest in him.

First, Then Consider with thy self, what it is thy heart most earnestly pursues, (if thou hast not truly found and sought Jesus Christ, and life in him;) 'tis certainly to compass some such worldly design which may render thee esteemed in the world without dependance on other men, estimation with men, riches, pleasures, to make up (as thou thinkest) a full contentment, these are the goodly Pearls in the eyes of a natural man: consider then how empty and disquieted thy spirit is left after such a pursuit made good, and presently the thoughts of some new one, or else thy spirit will languish in the former, and grow weary of it.

Secondly, Consider the miserable uncertainty of all outward enjoyments, how liable to spoil, loss, decay, *Prov.* 23. they taken from thee, or thou from them in a moment: Much might be said to this.

Thirdly, When thou hast compassed all thy designes so much earth thou canst call thy own; thou must at last be content with just so much as will cover thy carcase, a feast for worms. Now compare this with the salvation of a Soul.

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First, What it is that is to be saved, A Soul, a precious darling Soul, a Soul worth more than the whole world, *Luke* 9. 25. Consider what a value God puts upon Souls, the whole world could not be a ransom for one Soul; had the whole Creation been in mans power, and he had offered it to God for the sin of his Soul, it had not been a valuable price; No, the blood of the Son of God was the high price of Souls; Ah consider the preciousness of a Soul, and it will awake thee.

Secondly, Compare this with what the Soul is doing till 'tis enfafed in Christ, 'tis *treasuring up wrath till the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God:* as if not wrath enough in hell already, 'tis treasuring up more; that wrath that made the holy Son of God cry out as 'twas poured upon him; the everlasting weight of wrath of the just avenging God; all the judgments that ever thou heardst or readst of, are but as mercy to this. Now consider with deep thoughts of heart, if all thy pursuits of outward enjoyments here, will poize Salvation from such, such wrath.

Thirdly, Compare it with what the full enjoyment of Salvation is: the holy, blessed, full, eternal rest of God, with a weight of Glory, crowns of Glory, transformed to be made capable of enjoying it, where we shall never be tempted to sin, nor sin any more: Oh to be in the bosom of Jesus Christ, filled with the fulness of love, continually satisfied, and yet never nauseated, pleasures, peace, rest, joy, glory, God himself, whose presence thou shalt as fully enjoy as a glorified Creature can possibly be able!

Now then I say, Consider, if the Salvation of such a precious Soul from such unsupportable wrath to such a fulness of Glory with the infinite God, be worth hazarding, for disquieting earthly accommodations, enjoyments, to cause thee so securely to neglect such Salvation? *Hebr.* 2. 3. Where mark, 'tis not said, the open scorning the means of such Salvation; but the neglecting of it.

Yet a little further, Consider 3 things as to this condition here below, that thou maist not think thy good is all in expectation.

1. That the least of Jesus Christ is better than all the world; shouldst thou only suffer with Christ here, more glory in it than in all the world; *The Spirit of God and glory resting upon thee*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. The reproach of Christ is better than the pleasures of *Pharaohs* house, *Heb.* 11. How better? That sweet and heavenly fellowship with him, thou maist here attain unto, that thou maist be able to say, Thou hadst rather have one hour with Jesus Christ, than all the treasures of the world for ever; Ah hadst thou one taste of his love, how wouldst thou thirst after him! though this be as a riddle to a dark carnal heart that knows and savours Him not.

2. Consider, That all these restless desires, affections, and windings of thy heart, shall be raised and refined, and meet with that abundant satisfaction in Jesus Christ, far above what thou canst propose to thy self in the pursuits of things here below, solid and durable Soul-contentment, *Prov.* 8. 18. though with some disturbances by reason of distempers from sinful flesh, yet 'tis here, the more of Christ, the more composure of spirit, sweetness, rest; which is not so,

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in the more gain of Earthly advantages; these do only widen and enlarge, but not satisfie desires.

3. Consider, that with Jesus Christ thou hast the Promise of all other things best for thee, *Rom.* 8. what wouldst thou have more, unless thou wouldst be thy own carver in the world, and not take in the wisdom of God to dispose them to thee? Men of the world, they would make as sure provision as they may for themselves and Families, and so contrive, design, eat the bread of carefulness; but let thy purchase, gain, and interest thou aimest at, be thy part in Jesus Christ; Count but all things loss to win Christ, and then thou gainest right to all things, and so if thou wantest any outward mercy, 'tis not because God thinketh it too good for thee, but not so fit for thee; God seeth, that mercy would haply lessen thee in the sweeter, closer, enjoyments of Jesus Christ; Why then, consider, if that be the reason why the Lord with-holds such and such things from thee thou wilt consider now, I have more of Jesus Christ for it, and so no loser by the hand; no need of repining of Spirit in me, but to want them chearfully and gladly; yea, this will be thy blessedness, that whereas now thou canst not miss such or such things, but thy heart sinks within thee, then thou wilt know how to answer all thy cares of spirit, and see the wise hand of God ordering all for thy good; So that here's the way to provide all, to ensafe all, to sweeten all, to have part in Jesus Christ, to be earnest in the pursuit of him, till he will say unto thy soul, I am thine, and a Covenant passeth between thee and him, and he is fairer than the Children of men, and all beauty and goodness in him: then, whereas

others have meer creatures, thou hast the love and goodness of God in them, thou hast them not by common Providence, but by a Covenant of Love by Jesus Christ, by Promise; the least mercy is sweet unto thee, for the kindness of God is in it.

Take then these three together, the least of Christ better than all the world, all enjoyments which are promised in the Creatures eminently in him, with him the promise of all other things; What can thy spirit be opened to more? O wretched principle of Atheism and Unbelief! what hath sin and Devils done upon a poor worm, that he should in the darkness, deadness, emptiness, disquietness of the Creatures be seeking light, life, fulness, contentment, which they are not able in the least measure to give, and one drop of Jesus Christ, and Grace brings them all as fountained up in him.

If these things be so, and there is thus but one choice in the world that can quiet the restless spirit of man, the chosen one of God, Jesus Christ blessed for ever, in whom his Soul delighteth, why do we lye doting and puzling our selves in darkness, and disquieting our selves in vain? why do we not break off these Idols from our hearts? Oh let my Soul choose him, let him be the dear, dear choice of my soul, give me him or I dye!

2. If Jesus Christ be the chosen of God, the delight of his Soul, *Isai.* 41. 1. the heart of the infinite incomprehensible God can be delighted, satisfied, filled, from and to all eternity, with and by him, well-pleased, and never weary of him; Shall not the finite spirit of a poor Creature be overcome with the ocean of his goodness that is in him? Shall it be

afraid

afraid and ſtand reaſoning, Whether it ſhall have Earth or Him? Oh the folly of the Sons and Daughters of men: to hear of ſuch a prize, ſuch an Indies of all ſweetneſs and treaſure, and but a ſhort time to gain him; (loſe him now, and give a thouſand Worlds for him hereafter, and no gaining a look from him) though now his bowels more yern, and his heart beats and pants after Souls, with more fervency, than all the Creatures deſires can make in one, yet, that wretched Creatures, enſlaved to a curſed peace, kept by Satan, idolizing empty nothings, fulfilling luſts that reſtleſly hurry them up and down, ſhould have lower, baſer thoughts of Chriſt, than of the baſeſt thing they enjoy; for they will not miſs one of them to gain him; the pooreſt, meaneſt thing they enjoy, hath more of their heart, more care and thoughts of their ſpirits toward it, than Jeſus Chriſt hath.

Conſider thy own heartleſneſs, how ſeldom thou art in the thought of Jeſus Chriſt, and eternal life in him; how ſeldom the deep ſenſe of ſalvation in him is upon thee: and thus 'tis, thou muſt needs ſay, 'tis thus with me, Wretch that I am! What do I beſtow the ſtrength of my ſpirit upon? Why then poor Creature as thou art, what ſhouldeſt thou do but like that wiſe Merchant man, *Matth.* 13. who having found one Pearl of great price, he went and ſold all that he had, and bought it; Ah ſuch a Pearl the Pearl of God, the Pearl of Heaven and Earth, the Pearl of Souls is ſweeteſt, Jeſus Chriſt; whatever is precious, is laid up in him.

Now then ſell all that thou haſt; that is, be contented to venture the loſs of all for Chriſt, and thou gainſt, enſureſt all, as I ſhewd; get all thy riches pleaſures,

sures, enjoyments, under thy feet for Christ; let all go, so thou hast Christ: Aye, but how shall I buy him? Will Gold and silver do it? The meaning is, *to gain him*, 'tis spoken comparatively, as Merchantmen will sell all to buy a pearl of inestimable price, so will poor souls, that truly believe these things to be in Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit of God, and the experiences of his own Witness to be in him, divorce their hearts from all, venture all to *win*, Jesus Christ.

But must I then cast off all, my Calling, all my Possessions? No, but subject them to the pursuit of Jesus Christ, get them loosened from thy heart, let them not be a weight upon thee to depress thy Soul from soaring after him, keep them but as under-things things thou maist have or be without, and not be the less blessed; and so in obedience to God, and submission to his good pleasure, be industrious in thy Calling; but the motions, strength, aims of thy Spirit, to win and enjoy, love and honour Jesus Christ, and such will the Father honour, *Joh.* 5. No loss of time to seek him in his Word, no self-denial for him, no motion, or good-word, for Christ in sincerity, no Witness for his Kingdom, Gospel, People, but the Father treasureth it up, and will put honour upon thee for it.

And now having thus a little dwelt upon this, to take off all Objections from thy ensnared heart; Be not afraid to be awakened, and deeply considering the state of thy poor soul, though distempers and disquietness arise, though it be tempestuous with thee for a time, see the blessed and glorious recompences of it, by the Lord of life and glory, here, and to all Eternity: And now I will conclude thee, as stupid as

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a Worm grovelling in the Earth, as thou doſt, if theſe ſo weighty and important conſiderations do not work upon thee, being ſuch as Jeſus Chriſt left to move and pierce the Rocks of mens hearts, to lead them to life in himſelf; and ſuch as if thou putſt them off: will be as Swords in thy Bones, will flaſh back upon thee as a thouſand witneſſes againſt thee, if thou receive them not into thy heart, as thou wouldeſt do things that are moſt precious to thee: Why doth Chriſt ſo often knock, and thou wilt not own him? thou art gone abroad, or aſleep: In a word then, either put in thy Plea to God, or ſubmit and owne it, that 'tis better to paſs through a ſmall Tempeſt to Jeſus Chriſt, than to enjoy a world of empty contentments here, and be a Caſt-away under the furious Tempeſts of God's Wrath for ever and ever: Ah Soul! once get hold on the skirts of Jeſus Chriſt, and he will anchor thee to a ſafe Harbour Winds and Waves, Sin, Conſcience, Fears, Unbelief, Satan, all obey him; A word from him quiets all: Be not like great Debtors, afraid to enter into the conſideration of thy Debts, thy ſinful Eſtate, for fear of diſquietneſs (that is, to reſiſt the ſtrivings of God with thee, and he will not ſtrive always) but ſet the ſins of Heart and life before thee, though they ſwell to a numberleſs ſum in *Bloody Characters*; Spread them before God, and ſeek him, to ſue all thy Bonds and Debts upon Jeſus Chriſt, and God will take him thy Surety; 'twas the good pleaſure of Jeſus Chriſt to cancel and kill them all, they did their worſt upon him: ſo get to him, and in him, and the worſt is over, and all the bleſſedneſs I have poined at, is thine; but I ſhall prevent my ſelf: Theſe I

have

have laid down, as awakening, exciting considerations to a poor Soul to whom the Experiences of these things are yet but dark; and so the Lord bless them to thy Soul, and I pass to the next thing.

2. Saith a poor Soul, Well! I have had some good thoughts Christ-ward, and have made resignment of my self unto him, but I fear I am too much asleep as yet; that may be; Therefore be more awakened, look back to the sins thy Soul hath been divorced from; but not so, as to loosen the present hold thou hast on Christ; but to humble and abase thee more, and so cause thee to pursue and prize him more: Haply thou art a Soul whom Jesus Christ takes more gently to himself by degrees, with a softer hand, and so the Tempest not so great: But if the least of him be better than the best of all the World to thee, a Covenant with him, He is a chosen One and Pearl to thee; yea, if it be thy daily mourning that he is no more a Pearl unto thee, no more precious, thy Heart so dull, and then thou calleſt to him to come and make a more powerful and fuller abode in thy Soul, then beſure he is thine, though a trembling jealouſie upon thee to the contrary. Now if the Lord in much mercy hath awakened thee, by this or any other voice, or more awakened thee, than thou waſt, I would ſtill keep thee company in this diſcourſe, till thou findeſt in Jeſus Chriſt what I have here propoſed to thee: And ſo to ſhew thee yet further of the dealings of Chriſt to thee, as thou comeſt as a way-faring ſoul to him, in the next Propoſition.

Doct. 2. *When a Soul comes ſavingly it comes in a periſhing condition to Jeſus Chriſt*: Lord, ſave us, we periſh; Ἀπολλύμεθα we are loſt, or are in a loſt condition

dition; loſt, do thou ſave us: This doth rightly anſwer to the heart of *Chriſt*: and his purpoſe revealed in the Goſpel, *I am come to ſeek and to ſave*, τὸ ἀπολωλὸς that which was loſt or ready to periſh; that really is ſo, and that ſhall ſee it ſelf to be ſo, *Luke*, 19. 10. So in that threefold Parabble, *Luke* 14.. to ſet forth ſuch a ſinner that Chriſt draws in to his ſalvation, *I have found my ſheep which was loſt*, ver. 6. *Rejoice with me, I have found the piece that was loſt*, ver. 9. And ſo of the Prodigal, *Let us eat and rejoice, my Son was loſt and is found*, ver. 23.24 'Tis Chriſts rejoicing to find ſinners loſt in themſelves: To this purpoſe *Paul*. Phil. 3. 9. *That I may be found in Chriſt*, implying, he was loſt in himſelf: Now to open this, how a Soul is ſaid to come to Chriſt in this loſt and periſhing condition.

Firſt, Periſhing in ſin, ſuch a ſight of ſin, as before is deſcribed; if it ſtay in its ſin, it muſt certainly periſh; Sin cannot enſafe: The leaſt ſin is able to damn, much more the multitudes of them that lie undiſcharged upon it.

Secondly, A Soul that comes truly to Chriſt, comes periſhing in its own ſtrength: 'Tis likely, thoſe who were ready to periſh in the Ship with Chriſt in the tempeſt, that they toi'led long in their own ſtrength, rowed with their own Oars, with much painfulneſs, till they ſaw all was in vain, and then they throw down all, *Maſter ſave, or we periſh*: So a poor Creature, after ſome conviction and awakening 'tis apt at firſt to be toiling in its own ſtrength, its own natural ſufficiencies, ſets to repentance, duties, obedience in its own ſtrength, turns in the outward man from the groſſer evil of his ways, but then backſlides again

again; and all, because he would be his own deliverer, work for, and by himself, at least contribute something himself: But to come weak and strengthless to *Jesus Christ*, helpless in it self, this goes hard: To acknowledg to the glory of God, and our own shame, That if any thing be left on our score, to make good with God, perish we must, this goes to the quick: Indeed, our Pride and self love is very unwilling to yield to this, a Creature would not be found to be at such a total loss with God, so far to have spoiled and undone himself; to be so wholly weakned and deadned by sin, as not to be able to help the Lord Jesus one tittle in saving us, but the whole stress must be laid upon him: yet thus it is, *When we were without strength Christ died*, Rom. 5. 6. And so when Christ comes to give a Soul the blessing of his death, and to estate him in it; It causeth the Soul to know and feel, that it is without strength and helpless, and then 'twill be at his feet, perishing in it self without him: Nothing is more strongly setled upon the spirit of a sinner than this self-sufficiency, and opinion of its own power: He can pray, repent, hear the Word, receive, be just, do all, and acceptably enough to God, as he deemeth, and still on the lees of his own strength, not knowing what belongs to the spiritual performance of any duty, and so befools himself: Now this is the first thing, a Soul coming into Christ, is to perish in, in all its own strength.

Thirdly, It is to perish in all its own Righteousness; 'Twas in vain for these poor men in the ship, to be hiding themselves in Cabins of their own when the ship was so tossed and shaken, to lie nuzling

ling in their own Wares, though never so precious; No, all the precious Merchandize must over-board, pass for nothing; so when a Soul comes to Christ for help, all its own Cabins of its own Righteousness must be cast away: All thy former service for Hearing, Praying, being just and sober (if thou wert so) which was thy Cabin, thy Covert in the Room of Christ, must be look't upon as thy sins, as that which is but an abomination in the pure eyes of God, *Prov.* 15. 8. *The Prayer of the Wicked* (that is of every person out of Christ) *is an abomination to the Lord*: As for thy Publick Worship; that haply thou reposest most in, What saith the Spirit of God of it, *Isa.* 1. 13 *Vain oblation, abomination, it is iniquity, the solemn meetings they are a trouble to me, I am weary to bear them, When you make them, I will not hear them*, ver. 15. And why? Because the sins of such a person are not pardoned, his person not justified, he is not in Christ, he doth not sanctifie God's Name in his Services; not directed to right ends, and so hateful to the pure and righteous God: And yet, fond man, is apt to hide and secure himself in these things, as *Adam* in his Fig-leaves: So he prays a little, in a customary way, dead-hearted manner, with some kind of outward reverence: so he gives Alms, goes to Publick Worship, is righteous to men: (things good in themselves, if aright, and to right ends performed;) And if he slip, a little repentance of his own added, and Christ to make up what he wants, this is the hold of the most, and sends as many Souls away empty from Christ, as any thing whatsoever: What formal Professours, I mean, the common bulk of the People of this Nation, reach so far as a Pharisee in all the duties

ties they boaſted in? and yet obſerve (and do it with deep thoughts of heart) that in *Matth.* 23. when the Lord Jeſus preach't his laſt Sermon to them, after he hath ſeven times pronounced Woes unto them, he puts this confounding queſtion to them, *Ye generation of Vipers, How ſhall you eſcape the damnation of hell?* ver. 33. Moſt (indeed) periſh upon this account. That in *Rom.* 10. 3. among many others, is very remarkable, They being ignorant of Gods Righteouſneſs, go about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, and have not ſubmitted to the righteouſneſs of God; Ignorant, how holy and perfect that righteouſneſs is, in which God will accept of and juſtifie a Creature; Ignorant of the righteouſneſs of the Law, conſidering not that the holy and ſpiritual Law of God reacheth to the Heart and Spirit, and that one motion awry, if we ſtand to that, damns a Soul for ever, or that the worth of his repentance and duties can make God amends for what he faults as I ſhew'd; and ignorant of the full and acceptable righteouſneſs of Chriſt (though perhaps ſome general notion of it in the Brain, and able to diſcourſe of it, yet as to ſound and ſpiritual diſcerning of it, and cloſing with it, ignorant of it) and ſo goeth about to eſtabliſh his own righteouſneſs; And ſo is eſtabliſhing that which the Lord will deſtroy, eſtabliſhing that which he ſhould be periſhing in, and ſo doth not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt; through Ignorance and Pride, and Self-conceit, doth not ſubmit unto it, never beaten out of, and periſhed in their own, that they might ſubmit unto Chriſt's, to be accepted for Chriſt's obedience, and not for

their

their own: And yet having thus submitted, to delight in the Holy Will of God also.

4. A Soul must perish in all its outward comforts, as to be a Refuge for him; something hath been said as to this already: The spirit of a man being an active mover, must fasten and feed upon something; and having lost God and communion with him, it turns to the Creatures, and would satisfie it self upon them; which, bearing no proportion to it, cannot afford him fulness: Therefore convinced of this, he comes to Christ, as having rested (such a rest as it was) in perishing things, and sees, if he stayes upon them, he must perish in them.

In a word, Consider all those lying Refuges, which a Soul finds out to hide himself, and pacifie Conscience with, there doth the searching God find him out, and drive him out of them, and unfastens his hold of them, then doth God, as it were, throw him at the feet of Christ, then Christ's bowels yern after him, and lays hold upon him: Then will that Soul tell the Lord Jesus, that he is come to perish in his view under his eye, if he do perish; but resolved to look after no other Helper if his good pleasure be not towards him: I will yet step aside to speak to a Soul, that hath not yet thus perished in all, but Christ.

Why then sinner, consider, Here's that will take down thy Plumes, thy inbred self-conceit, and self-flatteries, that will undo thee, if thou any longer hearkenest to them; and yet walks up and down as self-conceitedly, as if all thou trustest in, were as safe as Heaven.

1. As to thy ſin; I have pleaded with thee before, but a word more. Dareſt thou pretend to be ſafe in thy ſin an hour more? Dareſt thou walk upon the brink of Hell, and ſmile upon it? Tell me, Doſt thou believe ſin as certainly damnable (while thou art in it, unpardoned, not fled to Jeſus Chriſt) as God reigneth in the Heaven, and is juſt? Doſt thou believe it? Sure thou doſt not; elſe thou durſt not give reſt unto thy ſpirit, till thou haſt found a Saviour to take thy ſin away, and his Spirit witneſſing the ſame effectually unto thee: Oh then, come and be as thou art (and be not too proud to own it) a periſhing ſinner at Chriſt's feet: How poor and trembling will a periſhing man be, that lies wholly at the mercy of another? So is it with thee, thou haſt not ſo much as bread for thy ſoul, till thou comeſt periſhing and hungring after Jeſus Chriſt:

2. As to thy own ſtrength, a word more: If it be ſo, that thou art ſtrengthleſs, helpleſs in thy ſelf, not able to move one ſtep towards God ſavingly of thy ſelf, thy heart is dead and weak as water; how poor a creature may this make thee in thy own eyes? Is it likely, that what thou haſt done hitherto, and performed toward God, hath been in thy own natural ſtrength, and ſo not accepted? Oh then go and plead with God, to give thee a heart, even upon his own free promiſe, *Jer.* 24. *I will give them a heart to know me*; Helpleſs ſinner, what wouldſt thou have more? Haſt thou a ſpiritual heart? I will give it, ſaith God, and give it for humble asking; Oh art thou willing to turn at God's reproof! *Then behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you.* Behold? take

take notice of it, as the most encouraging promise thou canst fly unto: Turn thy face to Christ, and hear what he will speak, even upon those unanswerable Arguments he lays down in his Gospel; yea, beseech him but to turn thee to him, and himself to thee, and he will do it: O then go presently to him, while thou seest the way open, and earnestly beg his Spirit, and plead Christs own Promise: And that Spirit shall be an humbling, subduing, praying, renewing, quickning, mortifying, guiding, comforting Spirit in thee; And so thou shalt learn to perform all in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

3. As to thy own righteousness, let me have one *word* more with thee; Know, though thou maist make a good estimate of thy self, and that others do so also, in the things thou dost towards God and Man; yet consider, that *what is highly esteemed among men, is an abomination to the Lord*, saith Christ, *Luke* 15. To be round with thee, Darest thou imagine to stand and appear before the infinitely righteous, holy, heart-searching God, in such a patcht-up defiled Covering, as thy own doings and performances make? Wilt thou lie down wrapt in a Cobweb (such is thy Hope in this, *Job* 8. 13.) to cover thee from the piercing storms of God, or to hide a heart full of iniquity and Hypocrisie from the Eye of God? Or dost thou think that Jesus Christ will joyn his Righteousness with thine? In a word, instead of being a well-conceited Pharisee, (for 'tis no better) go and be a poor sinner at Christs feet, and be willing to let him have all the Glory in thy Salvation: Even put on Jesus Christ, by an humble, free, total resignment of thy self unto him, to undertake

thy cauſe, as hath been ſhewed, to work all thy works for thee, and in thee; And in ſtead of thy own defiled righteouſneſs, thou haſt ſtood a tip-toe in, the entire Obedience of Chriſt ſhall be thine, and thou ſhalt appear before God in that full, pure, ſpotleſs, acceptable Righteouſneſs of the Son of God, in which the Soul of God is infinitely delighted: Ah Soul! What a change is this, to part with filth and abomination, for the glorious Righteouſneſs of the Son of God, to be clad in it, and even ſhine forth before God in it.

4. Well! Do the ſame, as to any confidence in all thy Church-Priviledges, of being baptized, being a Proteſtant, no Heretick; Do the ſame, as to all Creature-refuges, as hath been ſhewed; and being undone and ſhattered in them, do not dare to be ſafe in them any longer: No, no pretenſion to ſafety, till thou ſhalt be ſafe in the Lord Jeſus, by a clear and full cloſure with him, till thou haſt him in thy arms by Faith, thy Soul embracing and twining it ſelf about him, till he ſhall ſay unto thee, I am thine, and thou ſhalt find power and vertue coming from him.

From what hath been ſaid, maiſt thou now with deep thoughts of heart ſay thus within thy ſelf; Ah Wretch that I have been, fond, ſelf-pleaſing, ſelf-flattering Wretch; how well conceited of my ſelf, how able thought I my ſelf to do every thing, how confidently have I ſtood before the perfect God, in the performance of my carnal duties, when they were as filthy as ſin could make them, and God was lothing of them? Now I ſee one Jeſus Chriſt is ten thouſand times better than them all; Now I will caſt

cast anchor into him, now I will contend for him, as for life; Now I will enquire, seek, wait upon his voice (his Spirit enabling me) till I shall find him, and all those Blessings reported to be in him: Now I will be diligent in duties, upon a better account; not as they are able to render me accepted and justified before God (so I do, and ever will renounce them) but as means (blessed be God) to conveigh Christ to my Soul, and as the testimony of my Obedience to him.

And now, if by the Lords blessing unto thee, upon what hath been said, thou wast such before, even a most perishing sinner in thy own eyes, take yet what farther is implyed in the heart of these words, *Lord, save, I perish*, which may be inlarged in such a plea as this; Oh blessed Lord Jesus of Life and Glory, Here's a Soul at thy feet, with the weight of numberless sins upon it, but not one dram of righteousness to cover him; a desolate, forlorn, shipwrackt Worm, that stands bound over in thousands of Debts to the just and dreadful God of Heaven and Earth; but hath not so much as one mite to pay him, unless with the forfeiture of my Immortal Soul: Here I come to thee, as thou hast commanded, and throw my self upon thee; I'le venture an immortal Soul with thee, If thou hast not Treasures enough to spare lying by thee, the infinite merits of thy own blood; If thou wilt not freely satisfie for me, and take the debts of my sins upon thee, and so stand between a just God, and a condemned sinner; If thou hast not favour enough with the righteous God to prevail for me, O I must perish, everlastingly perish.

Lord] It implies, thou art mighty and able to do it, for all Power is committed to thee: If there be not Power enough with thee, thou who art the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, and ſo able to reſcue my darling Soul, I am contented to ſink before thee; but thou, thou alone art the Lord of Life; oh magnifie thy great Power upon me, and even be my Lord, my Lord; other Lords, beſide thee, I would have none, *Lord Save*, &c.

Save] 'Tis for a great and weighty matter that I plead, that I come unto thee for; no leſs than to be eternally ſaved: ſaved from the everlaſting wrath and vengeance of God, ſaved to everlaſting Life and Glory, in the glorious preſence of God for evermore: Oh, thou ſaviour of men (that's thy Name, and Honorable Title) didſt thou not paſs through many abaſements, when thou waſt upon Earth, very unſuitable to thy glorious perſon? Didſt thou not drink of a moſt bitter Cup, full of the Wrath of Divine Juſtice? And was not this then in thy Heart, did not this then bear thee up, that thou ſhouldſt ſave? Ah ſave poor helpleſs Souls, that could never have been ſaved without thee: Oh! hadſt thou not infinitely delighted in ſaving loſt Souls, thou hadſt never been at ſo much pains and travel, and coſt in the Work: Oh, therefore, *Save*, *Lord*, *Save*; Yea, *Save*.

I periſh,] Muſt, will periſh, if thou doſt not ſave; *Save*, for the Waters are come over my Soul, I am ſinking, without thee; *Maſter*, *Maſter*, *I periſh*, Luk. 8. *Maſter*, *Careſt thou not that I periſh?* Mark 4. Oh, let it never be told in *Gath*, that even a complaining

ing forlorn Soul perished at thy feet: What! at the feet of a Jesus? Alas! If thou carest not that I perish, who will? If thou pitiest not, who will or can? Oh, for the honour of thy own Name, pity: If I should now perish in the view of Harbour, now I have seen, and cryed to a Saviour, Thy Enemies will speak evil of thy Name: Well! Blessed Lord, Thou seest all the Arguments I have to move thee; That which I will stick upon, and never give thee over with, is, that I must perish, perish without thee; yea, perish in thy sight, if thou succourme not; *Lord, save, I perish.*

Well now, Soul, if thou dost in this, or the like manner, pant after Jesus Christ, in such a perishing posture, and thine eyes are upon him, and followest him, and waitest what he will speak unto thee, I will a little prevent thee, and shew thee a copy or two of his tender heart in this particular: See *Luke* 19.10. *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost*: He *came*, 'twas his Errand, his Busin-ss; 'twas the main thing he had in his heart: What! that which thou so earnestly look'st for, even to *save*, yea more, to *seek* whom he might save: But what kind of persons? Even such as thou presentest thy self unto him, that which is lost, Souls that come as lost and perishing in themselves to seek him.

Have the worst thoughts of thy self, it can reach but to be a lost Soul; and such (saith Christ) if he be worthy of Credit with thee, he came to seek: If thou art seeking him, why, he was seeking thee before: He left it upon Record in his Gospel, and

he was in Heaven to see it made good: So much will that Scripture afford thee, and believe it. Another, *Isa.* 45.22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved*: Well now, Dost thou *look up* with a longing expectation to Jesus Christ for Salvation, to hear what he will speak unto thee? Why now, saith Christ, to such a looking, expecting soul, *Be ye saved*; Be it unto you, as you will: To confirm it to thee, hear him further in the same Scripture, *I am God, and none else.* None but me is able; and as for his good-will, and faithfulness in performing it, He further saith, *I have sworn by my self, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness*: And then observe, *ver.* 24. what he assures thee of, how fully he answers thy Errand, *Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.*

Mark, While thou art seeking and looking for it, thou hast it, while thou art perishing in thy own, thou hast found it fully in Jesus Christ: And therefore, as it follows there, in the Lord thou shalt be justified and glorified. Yea more (saith Christ) that thou maist not think it a common matter to him, as if he did not care, or it did not much concern him; *Rejoyce with me*, saith he, in *Luke*, as shewed, *for I have found that which was lost.*

But yet there remains one Objection in thy Heart, that as yet thou dost not taste the Comfort of this, thou dost not yet so powerfully hear the voice of Christ, nor so comfortably see his face: The Reasons of this are to be cleared in the next point.

Jesus Christ, for a time, seems to take no notice of

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a tempestuous perishing Soul, though nigh unto it. -- But he was asleep.

Now this seems not consistent with all those gracious and melting invitations of *Christ*, of poor wearied Souls to come unto him, that bespeak the yearnings and panting of his bowels towards them; but yet see how consistent it will be.

1. That 'tis his usual way of dealing: see *Matth.* 15. 22. The poor Woman there cried after Christ for mercy to her Daughter; but it holds, and is so applied in Spiritual Mercies also, for she came in saving Faith.

The Lord, at first, answers not a word, as if he were careless of her, as if it had been no part of his business in the World, to take notice of poor sinners at his feet, and when he did answer (for she would not from him without her Errand) his words were full of discouragement, I am not come but to *Israel*, (yet still she worshipped him, Lord help me). And yet a more reserved Reply, *It is not meet to cast the Childrens bread to Dogs*: Yet still she pressed, and had her Errand, though Christ seemed thus to chide her: So with *Mary Magdalen*, *Joh.* 26. 11.

Mary was seeking Christ alone, and seeking him in a proper notion, a Crucified Christ, and she sought him in a sweet posture, weeping after him, restless till she found him: Now Christ seemed for a time to take no notice of her, though he were standing by her, and his Heart full of love to her: See the Spouse *Cant.* 3. 1, 2. *I sought him, but I found him not* &c.

There are many choise Reasons of the Lords dealing thus with a Soul for a time.

1. This

1. This works for the heightning and drawing forth of Faith; for a Soul to follow after Christ when the Tempest is upon it, in a perishing condition, and Christ seems to take no notice of it: When his present dealings seem to thwart with his Invitations and Promises, this heightens Faith, as in the Woman of *Canaan*, and draws it forth to pursue Christ the more.

2. When Jesus Christ thus with-holds, his smiles and comfort for a time, he is preparing the Heart to be a fit place for him, to break the pride and stubbornness of our Hearts, to subdue the roughness of them, to make crooked things streight: and then when our Spirits are thus subdued and broken, there's no more, but for Christ, to come in and dwell with us, when our Hearts are thus prepared to receive him.

3. He for a time thus clouds himself, seems to take no notice of a poor Soul, that the Soul may the more experimentally see, that all other Refuges cannot quiet the Tempest upon it: A Soul will be apt to be making trial in such a case of Creatures, and fly from one created Contentment to another, and to try what they are able to afford in such an hour; And when the Soul can find quietness in none, but still restless (as I have already shew'd it will be) Then it will closely and strongly cleave to Christ; Then it will clearly see (when Christ speaks) that all its quietness, comfort, peace, was from Jesus Christ alone.

4. It makes for the honour of the Lord Jesus, for a poor Creature to continue seeking and panting after

ter him, and will not off, even when Christ hides his face from it.

This gives more honour to Christ, than to live upon him, when he reveals himself to a Soul.

'Tis an honour to a Friend, to trust him, when absent from him; yea, when he seems to frown: So for a poor Soul, to follow and believe Jesus Christ sweet, and gracious, and faithful, though it never tasted him, gives most glory unto him.

5. When Christ thus with-holds himself for a time, it makes his presence the more welcome when he comes; The Lord Jesus loves to come welcome to a Soul; and how welcome is he? What a Heaven is his appearance to a poor, temptuous, cloudy, perishing Soul? When we have looked for a dear friend till we are ready to give off expectation, and then He comes suddenly upon us with smiles and kindness, what a joy is it?

So when the poor Friends of Christ, who lay hold on the Covenant of his Peace, and cry after him; Ah, when Lord, when?

And then he comes with a suddain smiling voice, Why *Soul, I am thine*, and I have betrothed thee unto me; yea, but one word, as to *Mary Magdalene, Mary*, and she answers *Rabboni*, oh my Master! This Reason may be further illustrated in the case of *Joseph* and his Brethren *Gen.* 44.

When they came to him as distressed men, *Joseph* reserves himself for a time, did not make known himself, though his Heart were full of yearnings after them, and what was it for but to make way for the greater endearments of them unto him? So much unexpected love let out upon them, that it

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even brake their hearts, *for they were troubled at his preſence*, ſaith that Scripture, being overcome with the loving kindneſs he ſhewed them. The way of Chriſt is ſometimes the ſame, He ſtays and reſerves e're he ſmiles upon a diſtreſſed Soul, to make way for ſweeter endearing heart-breaking love to be let out upon it.

And further indeed, As *Joſeph's* Brethren were troubled at his preſence, between the two conſiderations of the injuries they had done him, and the exceeding love he ſhewed them; As for *Joſeph* (ſay they) *we ſold*, &c. So poor Souls, ſeeking JESUS CHRIST, when he appears comfortably unto them,

They are even troubled at Chriſts preſence, conſidering the injuries they have done him, and the exceeding great love he hath ſhewed them, and this doth kindly melt the heart, when they wiſtly look on him; Till Chriſt anſwer as *Joſeph*, v. 5. of *Gen.* 45. *Come hither*, ſaith good *Joſeph* to his Brethren, *for God did ſend me before to preſerve life*; ſo ſaith the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Ah poor ſoul, come hither, God did ſend me on purpoſe to preſerve thy ſoul, to bear thy ſins, to eſtabliſh a Covenant of peace for thee; And how endearing and melting is this to a ſoul that ſo enjoys him,

6. Chriſt thus withholding himſelf for a time, as it makes way for the greater joy and more abundant conſolation to a Tempeſtuous Soul, ſo it will make a Soul more watchful and careful to keep Chriſt, *Cant.* 3. 4. I held him and would not let him go; If ſo tempeſtuous, periſhing, and ſuccourleſs, when I enjoied him not; Oh let them never take away

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my Lord; Here, Here, (his Soul clasping him) let him lodge, One hour of his fellowship, is a heaven; Oh no, thou must not go, my dearest Lord 'till I go with thee, and lie in thy bosom to all eternity; I will love thee, and honour thee while I am here, and therefore do not, ah do not, depart from me, I will not let thee go: But of this more in the close.

Is it so then, that Christ may for a time cloud himself from a poor soul at his feet, why then, Soul, let me return to the first posture I stated thee in, in this Point; Art thou one that hast said seriously within thy self from the sight of thy helpless condition, *I will arise now and go about*, Cant. 3. 2. I have been sitting all this while in the shadow of the vain world; But, now I will arise and seek him who hath life and peace in himself: though but now, yet I will enquire of the watch-man after him, *v.* 3. *I will wait at the posts of his doors*, his blessed and powerful Ordinances, till my soul finds him; Well, Take with thee this lesson; If thou findest him not in joy and comfort, assoon as thou expectest: Here's encouragement for thee, not to give off thy pursuit, as Satan and thy own unbelieving heart will be still prompting thee, To return to thy former ease and peace in sin and vanity, and the world again; or that thou hadst a good interest enough in Christ before thou thus troubled'st thy self: or it may be Satan will suggest, it is too late for thee, and thy day of grace is over, because thou hast slighted many. Well (I say) let none of these prevail with thee; Thou hearest upon what weighty and endearing Reasons Christ may for a time withhold Comfort and Peace therefore let de-

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deniall encreaſe thy dilligence, and not dead and flat it: Thou ſeeſt (Soul) that if thou wilt have Jeſus Chriſt, that he hath other work beſides filling thee with perfumes, and ſtaying thee with flagons of love, And if thou beeſt truly convinced of ſin, and ſo of thy abſolute need of Chriſt, thou wilt be glad of him, and ſeek to him for thoſe works within thee too; He hath ſtrong-holds of ſin to throw down; He hath Atheiſm, Pride, Self-love, Obſtinacy, all manner of fleſhly and earthly luſts to ſubdue within thee, that have by nature the poſſeſſion of thy heart, and theſe will grapple with him, and are unwilling to let thy heart go: all theſe unclean ſpirits muſt be caſt out, if thou wouldeſt have Chriſt dwell there; So that if thou wilt have him, thou muſt have him on ſuch terms, thou muſt thus ſuffer him to prepare his way, to have a reſting place within thee, And thoſe luſts may not domineer with him; If thy debate within thy ſelf be rather to venture his loſs than to part with the old gueſts of thy heart that he would caſt out, then thou doſt not yet know what belongs to the guilt, and filth, and reign of ſin, which thou wilt cry to be rid off, when thou truly ſeeſt what miſchief it hath done thee: If that be indeed the terms thou inſiſteſt on, 'tis but a little ſtirring of meer natural conſcience and not the convictions of the Spirit; Many Souls no doubt, from ſome ſuch temporary common enlightning of the natural conſcience, go and make an eſſay at Chriſt, liking well of peace, and ſalvation; but finding that luſts muſt die for it, they give up the purſuit again, or elſe will have him (pretend to have ſo) and make him lodg with their unclean

luſts

lusts, to protect and countenance them, and so make him a half-Christ, divide his work; make him indeed (like those blasphemers in the Gospel) to have an unclean spirit, and sin to be Nothing: As many wretches in this age do assert, and indeed all carnal professors of Christ do in their conversations imply, when they serve their Lusts, and cry, Christ Christ; Now, Soul, yield up a heart freely to him, and let him make one lust after another bleed for it. Let him make good his way and possession, Let him subdue all opposition in the heart, and lay low all the crooked ways of it, and see what a *Temple* he will make for himself in the close; In a word, follow him, and hold out in his strength, and thou shalt have more than thy errand.

2. Learn well from hence to understand Christs meaning in his invitations, not as if the thing promised were all to be enjoied in a moment; Thou maist rest confident in this, that the heart of Christ will be true to thee in them, though thou waitest for a time, considering, that one hour of his joy, is worth the waiting of an age, much more a heaven and eternity by it; And 'tis an everlasting rest thou seekest in him.

3. It chides the repinings of our hearts against this way of dealing by the Lord Christ; It rebukes all our hard thoughts of him, though he stay a little when we cry after him: Oh be contented for his wisdom and love to order all things for his more sweet welcome, and more sure and comfortable abode with thee: But yet to a Soul under the impatiency of anguish of Spirit,

Consider 1. Dost thou truly come to Christ, as be-

before, dost thou frequently spread thy case before him, and plead his own bowels, free invitations, promises, his interest with his Father, with him; some lie repining, but not ernestly follow Christ for what they want, *&c.*

2. Consider duly, If there be no lust that holds up its head, and would not yield, that is as a right hand, or right eye; go to God for a more narrow search of thy heart; say, (as *David*) *Search me, prove me*, and *try me*; If there be any iniquity in my heart undiscovered, reveal and mortifie it at the very root.

3 Consider, that though thou hast not sensible comfort, yet thou art supported of the Lord in thy present condition, which thou maist indeed consider with comfort, *Psal.* 63. 8. *My soul followeth after thee, and thy right hand upholdeth me*; So continue to follow hard after God, and if thou findest his right hand, his power sustaining thee, thou maist conclude as *David*, v. *last of that Psalm, But I shall rejoice in God*, &c. thou shalt be satisfied with his goodness; yea, if thou find such a promise breaking in upon thy spirit, and thou gathereſt support from it, it may be an evidence, a love-token to thee, that God is in a way of love and comfort to thee.

4. Consider, that faith and sensible enjoyment of Gods love do not inseperably go together, are not the same, as some poor creatures be apt to fancy; 'tis faith and not sense, therefore learn to live by faith and not by sense.

But yet may some poor Soul say, This doth not come to the height of thy condition, the very strength of this tempest in the conscience being upon

on thee: Ah thou art a forlorn, tempestuous soul indeed, thou saist: Why now then, I will particularly deal with thee.

Read thy condition in *Isa.* 54, 8, 9, 10, 11, *&c.* 'Tis spoken of the State of the Church, but is truly applicable to thy condition; *ver.* 6. the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in Spirit: yea, *ver.* 11. *Oh thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted:* that fits thee: See *ver.* 7, 8. *For a small moment have I forsaken thee but with great mercies will I gather thee: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer*; A small moment, and a little wrath, but great and everlasting kindness: But may not the Lord, if he please reserve and withhold these from poor Creatures that come thus afflicted and tossed with Tempest? I answer from *ver.* 9, 10. *For this is as the waters of Noah unto me, for as I have sworn that the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth; so I have sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee: For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee:* Here's the Oath of God upon it, and sooner shall the Waters cover the Earth again, and the Mountains remove themselves, than the Lord rebuke and utterly cast off such a Soul; Neither shall the *Covenant of his Peace be removed*, that is, as God tenders a new agreement, and to be at Peace with sinners, contented he is, yea, infinitely desirous of it: Can he then cast off a Soul that comes tendring it self for

peace with him, that would lay hold on his Covenant *Isaiah* 56. 6.

But it may be thou wilt say; If indeed I did, or could take hold of Jesus Christ, and of the Covenant of his Grace, then I could take-in the comfort of these words, but I cannot find that I do.

1. In answer hereunto: Know thou art just in that posture that a poor soul should be in, that comes to take hold of him, and of his Covenant: That is, knockt off from all thy former holds, and art in a *sinking* condition; and thou art crying out, *Save me, Psal.* 69 1. As sinking men do, when the *waters are overwhelming*; And thou dost catch after, reach after Christ: Sure, Soul thou hast some hold of him.

2. Ah but thou wilt say, I do even tremble to lay hold on Christ I am so vile; I fear he will not suffer so vile a wretch to lay hold on him. Wilt thou, Soul, take his word, if he tell thee, Thou maist? See what is spoken to thee as well as any Soul in the world, *Isay* 27. 5. *Or let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.* Let him saith the merciful Lord, and doth as it were *lean* to thee in a Promise that thou maist do it: But thou wilt say, shall I then have Peace? Yea, (saith Christ) He shall, He shall make peace with me. What more, thou poor fearfull Soul?

3. Ah, but thou say'st thou canst not *take hold* of him, though he thus speaketh: why then Soul go and lye at his feet, and beseech him to *take hold of thee*: And he will do it: In this way thou wilt find sup-

support: yea know that Jesus Christ doth first take hold of a poor Soul, and thy support lies in this, that when thou comest reaching forth after Christ, his hand hath hold of thee, and therefore thou shalt not sink.

4. Beg him also to give thee a hand, to give thee Power to lay a faster hold on him; and take thy Bible, and read *Isay* 40. 10, 28. *to the end*, and tell me, if he will not do it, *He giveth power to the faint, and them that have no might*, &c. and that thou saist is thy cause; Go then and ask it of him, and thou shalt have *might*.

But yet further will a weak mis-giving heart be reasoning against God and it self: I fear, for all this, that 'tis in vain for me to seek, my heart sinks within me: Now mark what the Lord said to this, *Isa.* 45. 19. *I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the Seed of Jacob, Seek me in vain: I the Lord speak in Righteousness, and declare things that are right:* This the Lord doth not reserve as a secret, but would have it proclaimed on the house top: Let it be known to every poor weak Soul that seeks me, It shall not be in vain: As if it were laid down on purpose (as indeed it is) to answer such a fond reasoning: And further (saith he) *I the Lord speak Righteousness*, I do not trifle with and delude Souls, but speak in good earnest *the things that are right*, and ver. 22. *I am a just God*, true to my Word, and therefore not to be reasoned against by men or Devils: Away then with such debates as thou dost foster in thy heart; yea, with such vile disputings against God, as to say within thy self, 'Tis too late, 'Tis in vain, my case is desperate,

rate, God will not hear, and therefore why should I seek? To what purpose is it? Is not this to belye the Wise and Holy, and Faithful God, so to adde abundantly to thy former Iniquity? In a word, If thou dost seek and adventure, and try what God will do, if thou art at last cast off, thou canst but be damned; And thy seeking, if thou couldst fail, will rather be a mitigation of thy torment than an encrease.

Well, but yet further may a Soul object (for the Devil hath a world of Sophistry this way) If I should be stirred up to seek, upon these grounds, how shall I be ascertain'd that these Promises belong to me? Why, mark thou, dost thou not say, I am an afflicted Soul, disquieted, tossed with tempest, and in thy own thoughts forsaken? And saist, moreover, that thou art contented to seek and wait, seeing at worst, thou canst be no loser by it; why then by what plea art thou excluded, what Law, or what Caveat is put in against thee? Perhaps thou wilt say, thy sinning with so high a hand against thy God, with many grievous aggravating Circumstances; Why, sinful worm, know 'tis written as clear as the Sun, if thou know'st any thing of the Gospel and mind of Christ, that no sinner is excluded from acceptance, for the greatness of sin, but for want of coming to Christ that he might have life, *Joh.* 5. as hath been shew'd; The Truth is, thou art unwilling to be beholden to Christ, or impatient to stay his leisure, or else art resolved to believe the lies of the Devil against him, or else thou would'st not thus parly against him; Therefore bow thy self at his feet, and plead his own arguments, that he hath left

for thee in his Word, and do not ſtand asking whether theſe Promiſes belong to thee; for they are as much thine, as any Souls in the world, if thou wilt plead them.

But yet further may a poor Soul complain; Ah, I have a dull, dead, heavy, indiſpoſed heart, heartleſs am I to ſeek and cry, *&c.* I have ſhewed before that if thou wilt ask a heart, *I will give it thee*, ſaith the Lord; and ask his Spirit to raiſe up thy heart above that indiſpoſed diſtemper: Nay, Soul, let me ask thee, Canſt thou truly complain of, and feel ſuch a diſtemper: Oh what a dull, heavy, dead, indiſpoſed heart have I? 'Tis of the Spirit of life within thee, or thou could'ſt not ſo complain; And 'tis an earneſt of more of the Spirit to be given unto thee, Soul, maiſt thou be encouraged to ſeek and wait privately, publickly, be diligent in all means, yea with ſome meaſure of contentedneſs, till the Lord ſhall ſpeak, and when thy ſpirit is ſo ſubdued, uſually Comfort is not far off; But as to thy further encouragement, I will lead thee on to the next Point.

Thus having ſhewed the condition of a humbled convinced ſinner, coming to Jeſus Chriſt in a periſhing condition, and waiting for the voice of Comfort and Aſſurance, I ſhall in the next place endeavour to ſtate ſuch a Faith which Chriſt in the Text calls, a little Faith; *Why are ye fearful, &c.*

Doct. 4. *True Faith may be conſiſtent with many fears and weakneſſes, and yet may engage the heart of Chriſt to ſuccour.*

By what hath been opened, we may give forth

this description of Faith; 'Tis a coming to Christ in a perishing condition for Salvation; which Divines usually stile Faith of recumbency, relying and rowling upon Christ, which is not always accompanied with Assurance, this being but the height and excellency of Faith, not of the absolute being of it, that is, that without which Faith cannot be; So Assurance is not of the nature of Faith.

That which I am to clear, is, *That this Faith may be consistent and mixt with many Fears, and that yet it may engage the heart of Christ to succour.*

1. From example, *Mar.* 9. 22, 24. *Lord, I believe, help thou my Unbelief*; Faith so weak, that he knew not whether he might venture to call it Faith or not; I believe, but straight takes himself off, as if he were afraid to stile it Faith, Lord help mine Unbelief; or if I do not believe, Lord help me to believe, In such a suspense the words imply him to be, and yet 'twas a Faith that sped in its errand; So *Matth.* 8. 2. In the case of the Leper, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*; I believe thou hast power enough, but whether thou wilt receive and help such a miserable creature, that's a hard question: He only viewed the Power of Christ, but much doubted what his heart might be toward him. In the commended Faith of the Centurion, *ver.* 6. he only spreads the case before him, comes to him, and 'twas enough, ver. 13. *As thou hast believed, so be it unto thee*; *and he was healed the same hour*; So *Matth.* 9. 20, &c. in the case of the diseased woman; first, she came behind him from her self-unworthiness, and so doubting and fearing to come

come before his face, *she said within her self*, she had many parlies and reasonings within her self, whether she should go to him or not, but at last resolved on it, and to do it by stealth; See the same laid down by *Mark* 5. 33. 'tis there expressed, she came fearing and trembling, no question, as doubting of her acceptance, fell down before him in acknowledgment how unworthy a Creature she was for his notice, *and told him all the truth*, what a despicable Creature she was, how she had spent *all she had*, and now must be helped by him, or perish: and to misery had made her bold, and she ventured to come to him, hearing what a mercifull Saviour he was; The very posture of a poor humbled soul in its need, a poor open-hearted sinner coming to him. And then observe, how ready the Lords answer was, not acculing her and reasoning the matter with her, to tax her of her unworthiness, but bespeaks her kindly; *Daughter, be of good comfort, thy Faith hath made thee whole, go in peace and be whole*; the very errand a poor Soul comes to Christ for; And 'tis very remarkable what Christ answered to the two blind men coming to him, *Matth.* 9. 28. *Believe ye that I able to do this?* only if he was *able*, not whether he was *willing*; If it be objected, all these were for temporal blessings, I answer, That under these spiritual mercies and Salvation are couched; or, if not, there's the same reason of both. Yea, further to clear this, if you will look into the Histories of those eminent Believers and Saints, *Hebr.* 11. do but mark what weaknesses you may find in their Faith. *Sarah* her self, if you look to *Gen.* 18. she laughed within her self, and said, *Shall it be so?* A high que-

tioning of the Word of the Lord; and that upon which she rested was the Power of God only, which the Angels gave forth in that confirming word, *Is there any thing too hard for the Lord?* and so of *Abraham* himself, that God was *able* to preserve: Concerning his Heart and Willingness, of that no mention.

We shall enquire into the Reasons of this; Why Faith is mixed with such fears?

1. Because flesh and blood is against *Believing*, the the wisdom of the flesh is highly against it; for a Soul to go out of it self to another for Righteousness: the wisdom of flesh and blood is full of these λογισμοὶ 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. imaginations, reasonings, and disputings against it; 'tis against the pride of flesh and blood to be beholden to another for righteousness, against all those issues of Pride, self-love, self-sufficiency, and self-confidence: Now flesh and blood being thus set against believing in the Lord Jesus, 'tis disputing and reasoning against it, as *John* 1. 12, 13. *which were born, not of blood, nor of the flesh, nor of the Will of man, but of God.* So when *Peter*, Matth. 16. had confessed his Faith, saith Christ, *Flesh and Blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.*

2. Man is naturally under a Power of *Unbelief*; *Rom.* 11. 31. *concluded under Unbelief*: not only a heart unapt to believe, but under a Power of the contrary; *Hebr.* 3. ult. *they could not enter in because of their Unbelief*, a τὸ ἀδύνατον, an impossibility from Unbelief, while remaining so: Now this Power is not wholly vanquished, and subdued, but will still be

be mixing and rising up, and opposing more or less in all believers, &c.

3. A Soul finds nothing in himself to encourage him to believe, as in the case of *Peter* at his conversion, *Luk.* 5. 8. *Depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man*: so when the voice of the Lord is heard in the soul, it fears before him, and begins to see to purpose that he is a sinful creature; it is ready to depart from the Lord, and to bid the Lord depart from him: that which indeed should have been *Peters* ground of going to Christ, or to have besought him to come to him, his being a sinful man, he useth as a reason to bid the Lord depart from him: Lord, canst thou endure to look upon such a sinful worm such a filthy wretch as my self: Oh 'twill offend thy pure eyes but to glance upon me: So the Centurion, *Master, I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my roof*: Sense of unworthiness causeth a Soul to put up hard pleas against it self, and so the heart being taken up and overwhelmed, and abased in the sense of self-vileness and unworthiness, forgets and dares not so heartily plead Christs free grace and tenderness to receive it.

4. The Accusations of Conscience being awakened, as before, mustering up sin upon sin, joyned with the Aggravations of Satan, like a cunning Disputer who musters up all his Forces, to make sin as horrible, as ever he argued it pleasant and commodious: yea, his chief Darts he at the Faith of a Believer, to be reasoning against the grounds of Believing, questioning their Election, severing the Promises out of their sight, mudding and darkening their sight of

Christ

Christ, accusing them for unsound, and Hypocrites; tempting them from means, which make for strengthening of Faith: *Peter*, (saith Christ) *Satan hath desired to winnow you, but I have prayed that thy Faith fail not*; implying, Satan's design lay most against his Faith: through the malice and subtlety of Satan, Faith is put too hard to it, till the Lord rebuke him.

5. Faith is wrought forth gradually in the Soul by degrees: at first sown as a grain of Mustard-seed, a small seed: Corruptions and Reasonings, like over-spreading Tares ready to choak it: therefore being sown, as I may so speak, in weakness, at first, 'tis thus put to it for comfort; therefore *Paul* tells the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thes.* 3. 10, 13. That there was something lacking in their Faith, and the establishment of their Faith is much prayed for by him.

6. The Lord suffers it to be so, that his power in the supporting of a weak Soul, may the more appear: Faith is called, the *operation of the Son of God*, 2 Thess. 2. and, *that your Faith might stand in the power of God*: When a Soul is full of fears and misgivings, and ready to sink under them, then the hand of the Lord is more visible in sustaining, then we see by his power alone we stand: Had we a strong settled faith presently, we should rather be lifted up in our selves, or rest upon Grace received, and so not glorifie the Lord Jesus and live upon him for strength as he requires: Therefore the Lord suffers these fightings and reasonings within, that we might have continual recourse to him for support, and that we might see, that the beginnings of life, and growth

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of Faith, it is all in and from Jesus Christ, as the Author and Finisher of it.

For these Reasons, *viz.* the wisdom and pride of flesh and blood, the natural power of Unbelief not being wholly subdued, sense of unworthiness, the depth of guilt, accusations of Conscience, and the disputings of Satan, Faith sown in weakness at first, and all this suffered to ends of glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, that his power and grace may be the more magnified; therefore true Faith is mixt with many reasonings, doubtings, misgivings, disputings, fears, which do annoy it.

I will first endeavour to apply this, before I prove further, that such a Faith may engage Christ to succour.

1. If true Faith be thus mixt with fears and reasonings, it meets, first, with the easie Faith, that the most of people please themselves in; as, I thank God, I always believed, God forbid but I should believe in Jesus Christ, 'Tis easie very easie, indeed, to presume away a precious Soul: 'tis easie to flatter a mans self with an opinion of believing, and indeed 'tis nothing else but a customary opinion of Christ: but to believe in Christ Jesus, and savingly and effectually to apply his blood by his Spirit enabling, this is hard, ah hard indeed, to a poor convinced Soul, that hath deep thoughts of heart about the pardon of sins; Lord help my unbelief, and Lord, if thou wilt, and the like: This easy believing, is the dead sleep of sin upon the Conscience, and a general opinion in the brain that Christ died for sinners, even for all sinners to whom he is preached, heightned by the strong delusion of the Devil, whose work it is to perswade

swade Souls, that have nothing but a dead, general Faith, that they believe well, and on the contrary to dispute against the Faith of true Believers, that they do not truly believe. And this among others, may be a discovery of true Faith, Unbelief is still mixing and Satan disputing against it, as in the Reasons shewed.

If so much lye against believing pardon of sin in the Lord Jesus, how can it chuse but be so, but it must be a hard thing to a poor Soul to fasten upon Christ, in a Promise for Remission of sins, when so much opposition to it: Therefore this is an infallible note, true Believers deeply feel, and are humbled for Unbelief: Oh, 'tis the deep evil of their hearts, and that they most tremble at; but take a carnal, formal, dead-hearted Protestant, and no such matter with him: He could believe a thousand years together, and if he have any scruples, they be as nothing, a little prayer or the like, will quickly heal it.

And herein also is another great snare; Natural Conscience, that is, a Conscience not living enlightened and sanctified, may give some checks before, in, or after the commission of sin, and thence unregenerate persons do most usually gather, that they have truth of grace, because they have some little conflicts within, which they often upon, from *Rom. 7. the thing that I would not, that do I*: but the former (*I*) is meant of the regenerate nature, distinct to, and warring against the fleshly part, and not a total conflicting of the natural conscience from common enlightenings of the Word: So also, as to doubting and some small misgivings, these argue not a

truth

truth of Faith, unless they are only allayed by the going out of the Soul to JesusChrist, and the Evidence of the Work of Faith, with Power wrought forth in us: If thy doubtings be such, that do not settle again, till thou hast made a true entire close with Jesus Christ in self-renouncing, then they are of the Spirit, subduing sin and unbelief in thee: Therefore look narrowly to unbelief, as true Faith interests the Soul in Christ, and all his grace and promises, so unbelief excludes, while subdued, from all of Christ: It sins against *totum Dei*, every Attribute of God; So then they could not enter in because of unbelief; an utter impossibility upon it. And this may reign through deluded misperswasion of true Faith, though the conversation in the eye of men, civil and regular. I desire to acknowledg, to the praise of the rich grace of God, that the opening the power of unbelief, by a holy preacher of the Gospel, was the first time of the Lords, speaking to me in powerful convincement that I was in the state of unbelief, though before full of confidence of the safety of my condition. On therefore, Soul, whoever thou art, be jealous of thy own heart in this particular, unbelief is a close, spiritual, undiscerned evil, till the Lord come in, and shew thee what the strength of it is, by calling in a grain of Faith to grapple with it, which without the continual supply of his Spirit, will be overwhelmed by it.

Therefore, let me press the with a serious trial of thy self this way, that this is a dangerous snare, easin s to believe pardon of sin, and peace with God: So that unless thou canst make out a work of Faith, with power, by the Word and Spirit, question

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all, and so in the sight of thy meer naked condition make out for Christ, as hath been before directed as if thou went before a stranger unto him.

2. If true Faith may consist with so many fears and reasonings; why then a word yet more to the convinced poor Soul in its perishing condition, in it self, that hath got a view of Christ, and is pressing after him, but fears, ah sad fears, and misgivings arise. Why consider this well, If it were not so, though mightest justly question all indeed, whether any thing saving in thee: Tell me Soul, wouldst thou be again in the supposed safety thou wast once in, when no such conflicts in thee: No, thou wilt say, not for a thousand worlds, for then I was a dead worm in sin and unbelief: But thou wilt say, Yet I fear, I find it hard to believe, and fasten upon and apply one promise. So thou seest do all God's Children; ask of any the holiest and graciousest, they will tell thee many a serious experience of this, what travels the poor Soul hath had through doubtings, fears, sinkings, cloudings, and yet all calmed, sweetly calmed again, as hath been shewed, and am yet further to declare. The stays and the props of a poor Soul in this case have been opened.

But a word more, Is it no further with thee than this, *Lord help my Unbelief*; know, 'tis impossible to cry after Christ with complaints of Unbelief, without some truth of Faith: Canst thou reach but unto the power of Christ, to give him the glory of being able to succour thee, but doubtest of his willingness what his heart may be unto thee: Ah, thou sadly doubtest: Is it with thee, Lord, if thou wilt? still an *If*, know Faith in the power of Christ, as in the

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examples shewed, may be saying: Remember also Christ's melting answer, *I will, be thou clean; Be it unto thee as thou wilt, Go in peace*: And this to such Souls, who came believing in his power to save though trembling what his heart might be towards them: I am now further to shew, that such a weak pursuing Faith may engage Jesus Christ to succour, which hath received some demonstration already; but 'tis further cleared from these Reasons.

1. Faith, though never so weak, be it Faith (that is, such that resolves the Soul to venture all with Christ, and pursue after him) is a beam from Christ himself, shed by his own Spirit: 'Tis the Spirit so enabling the Soul to choose and follow Christ; therefore Christ will own such a Faith, and 'twill engage his whole heart to more.

2. 'Tis that grace, by divine appointment, which engageth all the priviledges and blessings of Christ to a Soul: Not from any worthiness in it, but by God's own Ordination; so that a Soul is not so much to reason thus: Can such a poor weak Faith engage Christ? But he is to look up to God's Ordination and promise that it shall. In a word, not to be poring upon the weakness of Faith, but to be eying and considering the free Promise, and so not to make an estimate of thy Faith, by present sensible enjoyment, and feelings of comfort; but by the going out to Christ in the indifinite free invitement and promise to all humble comers for life and salvation; and then say, and reason within thy self; The Soul, that according to Christ's own invitement, command, and promise, renounceth all other, and comes and follows him for life, shall have and find life in him: But

so

so doth this poor trembling Soul of mine (if I know any thing of my own heart) renounce all other, and flies to a powerful, free-hearted Jesus, mighty to save: Therefore I shall find him, yea, I have him; And this a true Scriptural spiritual reasoning, grounded upon Christ's own words, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Joh.* 5, 40, *Joh.* 6 37 *Rev.* 2 2.17. 1 *Tim.* 1.15.

But now, if thou yet feareſt, and art jealous, whether thy ſelf-renouncing and coming to and cloſing with Chriſt be full and entire: The next, and every time thou goeſt to him, and pleadeſt with him, (and do it often) proteſt againſt all other helps; and now there is no witneſs, but God and thy own Conſcience, that thou doſt periſh in all opinion of thy ſelf, or any other; all the ſtrength and righteouſneſs that thy ſelf and all the World to help thee hath, being but as dead water to thee, and that thou doſt proteſt againſt them, and ſo make an entire cloſe with the Lord Jeſus alone, that he may be thine, and thou maiſt be his, in Goſpel terms, and that thou art willing to take up his yoke and follow him.

Know alſo, that ſuch jealouſies of thy ſelf, are a good Argument of ſomething *ſound* within thee.

3. Further, If thorough thine unacquaintance with the Scriptures thou runſt upon a miſtake, and conceiveſt, that true Faith conſiſts in a full perſwaſion and aſſurance of ſalvation; Thou maiſt underſtand that it is not ſo; for aſſurance is the height and excellency of Faith, ſuch a degree that many gracious Souls are long ere they attain to it; yea, have only ſome ſhort glimpſes of in this life; And though

ſome

some arive to a greater measure of joy and assurance in the Holy Ghost, yet enjoyed by few in a constant tenour, while a bitter Root of Unbelief remains in us.

I do not here intend to give forth the consequent Evidences and fruits of Faith; only a word or two, as to the management of a weak Faith, while thou art thus in thy doubtings, or if Faith lie as it were dead, and doth not act lively upon Christ; Though in such a case thou art to be stirring up every Grace, yet do not stand poring upon such a heavy frame of heart, nor do thou think to lift up the hand of Faith by thy own Power, but go and lie before Christ, go forth from thy own heart to him, to re-quicken the habit of Faith, that thou maist draw new life from him, and this follow him for.

And then, though Faith be even as a withethered hand (as sometimes it is) Christ will speak to thy Soul, as to the man with a withered hand in the Gospel, *Matth.* 12. 10. *Stretch forth thy hand*, and thou shalt do so, and embrace Christ in thy arms, and thine affections run forth lively upon him.

It may be objected, Is it safe then to let doubtings and fear lies, and be careless of them, seeing thus mixing, they do evidence truth of Faith? No, but labour to get them suppresst and subdued by the Power and Spirit of Christ; though it be not absolutely thy duty to have Assurance, yet 'tis thy duty to labour and give all diligence to gain it, 2*Pet.* 1. 10.

But especially beware of such things, which do

deaden and stagger Faith, and some of those I will point out to thee, as to the case of a young Convert.

1. After conviction, inlightning, and in some measure, a self-emptying and renouncing, as hath been shewed, and so a sight of Free-grace and Christ to justifie from sin, and a rowling the Soul upon it, and also some delightful savour of it; then the main Temptation is to become negligent in duty: As to neglect humble, awful, diligent waiting upon God in Prayer, and other Ordinances: This reasoning being upon a younger Convert, because our Duty and Obedience doth not justifie us before God; therefore for no other purpose; But this is a dangerous snare, and too many poor Souls endangered with it; Neglect of Duty begets a vain and a wanton Spirit, and causeth the Lord to with-draw from us, and will stagger Faith, and cause thee to question any work upon thy Spirit.

2. Sleightness of Humiliation for former sins in our unregenerate State begets a dead and sleight spirit.

Though sins are not to be remembred after effectual Calling, as now able to condemn us, and God declares in his Covenant of Grace to forget them also, to remember them no more against us, yet they are not to be forgotten to other Considerations, *viz.* that we may be the more humbled and abased before the Lord, that we may loath our selves in our former detestable ways, and the sense

sense of the pardon of them may the more melt our hearts, *Ezek.* 36. 31. *Zech* 12. 10. Therefore after Grace received, 'tis good to be frequent in the renewing of serious and thorough, and as particular as may be, Humiliation for sins of Unregeneracy, though pardoned to us and changed from them.

3. Too familiar Converse with Carnal company, haply such, which before our calling, we did most frequently converse with, this will deaden our spirits, and beget discomfort; when a Convert will not owne and acknowledge to the praise of the rich and free Grace of God, the Change and Work the Lord hath wrought upon him; And so the want of that serious composed, reserved, wary carriage and demeanour answerable to a change upon the inward man, which will also quickly beget deadness, staggering, discomfort.

4. Either a neglectful, or a curious, critical hearing the Gospel preached, as to judge of the Gifts and Parts of Preachers, which will at last grow to a matter of Fancy, rather than to a Trembling at the Word, that it may purifie and assure the Heart.

This joyned with a neglect of reading the Scriptures; or reading them out of a curious enquiry to be able to speak discerningly before others, to have praise of men: This will also quickly cause a staggering.

5. As consequential of this latter, a self-conceit of knowledge and parts, growing to an over-wean-

ed conceit of our ſelves: This ſelf conceit is the main Bait of Satan in young Converts, and the cauſe of many after-trials, till a through diſcovery of it, and ſo a mortifying of it, uſually by afflictions, temptations or deſertions, or all: No evil more natural than to be lifted up in our ſelves, to have an itch to appear to be ſome body, and to excel others, and to ſeek for gifts and graces, not ſo much to honour God with, as to pleaſe others, and to gain a repute with men: This to be lookt to with a godly jealouſie, as that which will cauſe a ſtaggering upon thy ſpirit at laſt.

6. The want of diligent ſearching our own hearts, from whence the former and other evils get ſtrength, and lie cloſe, ſpecially as to Pride and Hypocriſie, and ſo not attending to that main grace, which is the Soul of all, ſincerity and ſimplicity of heart, to aim at God, and not at our ſelves: A ſleight practice of ſearching the more cloſe and ſpiritual corruptions, begets an unſafe temper; and when they appear, and the Lord gives a deeper diſcovery of them, will ſtagger thy Faith, and bring all afreſh into queſtion, whether any ſoundneſs at all in thee.

7. Not attending to growth in mortification, ſincerity, zeal, and holineſs; but to content our ſelves we are (we truſt) converted, therefore ſafe enough, much carnal joy mixing with that of the Spirit: This growth upon a young Convert is apt for a time to be neglected, whereby Faith is overgrown 'ere they are aware, and begins to be at a loſs, till the Lord have a way to awaken them to it.

8.

8. Inordinate enjoyment of any Creature-mercy be it what it will, either by too affectionate pursuit, or delight in it, staying upon and feeding upon the Creature, and not carried up to God's goodness by it, and so not using it with a loose heart: This is apt to bring many snares upon our spirits and ways; and at last to cause us to lose the favour of God.

9. Want of a holy Fellowship with such who are godly, either by frequent conference, and communicating their experiences of God, specially in Church fellowship, which will abundantly quicken and strengthen Faith, and every gift and grace of Believers, and maketh much for the retaining and encrease of comfort,

10. In a word, a sleight frame of Spirit, the heart not being daily awed with a holy fear of God, whereby lightness and vanity, and discomposure ariseth; As also negligence in a mans Calling, or in some duty to some Relations,

These are the special things which are apt to stagger and deaden Faith to cause the Lord to withhold or withdraw comfort, that we are brought to question all again, Whether any true saving-work upon us, to cause the Lord to let out sore temptations upon us: or to lay his hand upon us, very usually in sickness, or crosses in our Estates or Friends: And indeed, by these, a sounder and deeper Humiliation is wrought forth, even a second Conversion, when a narrrower search is set up in our hearts; and

sincerity, watchfulness, and other Graces come more in view.

Now, as those evils, negligences, and defects, do thus startle, weaken Faith, and hinder Comfort; so a diligent care, opposite to all those, as thou maist particularly review them, are means blessed of God to strengthen Faith and Comfort, which I shall only mention, *viz.* Diligence in Prayer, and every other Duty renewing of Humiliation, avoiding much converse with carnal men, careful attending upon the Word preached, not with curiosity, but Humility: Not to be puff'd up with self-conceit of parts, search for Hypocrisie, attending to growth, enjoying the Creatures with a loose and mortified heart, the fellowship of the Saints, a serious frame of Spirit, joyned with Wisdom and Care, as to all relations towards God or Man; These are the ways wherein God usually sheddeth Comfort upon his people.

It may further be enquired, Whether Faith will ever cast out all Fear? I answer.

It may in measure keep under Servile, base, disheartning fear; But there is a fear which is *vigil anima*, the watchman of the Soul, a servant to Faith, which makes the heart not over-despondent, and bears off security, and keeps all awake as the Centinel of the heart, *Heb.* 4. 1. *Let us therefore fear*, &c. And when the blessed intervals of joy and assurance come, then let this fear be stirring and 'twill preserve thee from wantoning with thy joy, that it mix not, nor break out into carnal joy; And indeed, when such a holy Fear doth arise and mingle it self with our joy, then it is most spiritual

and

and doth best distinguish a fleshly joy from a spiritual.

And now having thus far stated the case of a poor, willing, hardly believing Soul, as coming in a perishing condition to Christ, with such considerations, which may be for a stay unto it, till Christ speak, as in the Text, *Why art thou fearful?* We will now set the tempestuous Soul in this perishing condition, in weakness of Faith, before Jesus Christ, and so briefly consider what this rebuking voice of Christ is able to do; Only I will first question with this fearful Soul, in Christ's Words, *Soul, why art thou fearful?* thou wilt answer readily, *From my sins and unbelief.*

1. Hath Jesus Christ power enough to subdue them? *Isa.* 43. 13. *I will work, and who shall let it, or turn it back?* When he will work in any business his Father hath committed to him, whereof this is one of the chief, even to revive and comfort weak Souls that come unto him, *Isai.* 40. 10 11. *Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him, behold his Reward is with him, and his work before him*; What work is this he owns with so much Power, and puts such a *Behold* upon? See in the next verse. *He shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd, He shall gather the Lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young*: Now, mark, Soul, Here's his Power to work, and none, none shall turn it back; and the work thou hast for him to do, is his own Work and business, therefore with encouragement spread it before him, commit it to him, and neither sins nor Unbelief shall stand before him.

2. Is't his Will and purpoſe to receive ſuch a weakling? This hath been opened in part before; But conſider, Soul, 'twas his very purpoſe in coming down from Heaven, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. and having wrought forth his purpoſe in order to it here below, Now he is paſſed into the Heavens to make it good to poor Souls; to whom? to ſuch who come on ſet purpoſe for it; Therefore when 'tis Chriſt's great purpoſe, that which his heart is full on, and alſo thou goeſt and ſeekeſt to him on purpoſe for it, what need'ſt thou ſtagger and be fearful?

Now that this is the work that is ſtill before Chriſt to do, and his purpoſe not changed, is left upon record in his laſt words to *John*, Rev. 22.17. *Let him which is athirſt Come*, which was ſpoken after his Aſcenſion into Glory.

But ſtill it may be thy mind runs upon this, This Power and Purpoſe of Chriſt I believe in the general to be true of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but whether am I one of thoſe to whom it is meant? Mark, *Whoſever will*, anſwers that, as I have reaſoned before: Shew me how thou canſt exclude thy ſelf from that general Invitement, or thou muſt grant it takes in thee alſo, that deſireſt to come to him; And if thou ſtill reaſoneſt, as to thy particular caſe, as receiving ſuch Aggravations which every ordinary ſinner doth not: I anſwer, There is no ſtating of Caſes, but *Whoſoever will*, and *whoſever is athirſt*. Know in a word, That 'tis written as with a beam of the Sun for Clearneſs that the Goſpel excludes no Soul from Salvation, becauſe he is ſuch or ſuch

a sinner, but for not coming, in the sense of it, to Christ, that he might have life in him: If thou shouldst catch at that, and say, Thou feareſt thou art not sensible enough; know that is a measure of sensibility of sin, and such as may upon a true account send to Christ: And therefore, Soul, say what thou wilt within thy self, and reason from thy self, and so maist put in these demurs; do but eye Jesus Christ in his power, purpose, free and general invitement, and thou hast no ground to be fearful: And therefore why art thou fearful? Thou hast no reason, if thou eyest Christ, to be so: specially if thou consider what is next to be opened.

Obs. 5. *That Jesus Christ can with a word rebuke all the tempests and fears upon a poor soul coming and seeking to him*; In the handling of which I shall be very brief.

He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still, Psal. 107. 27. True, in this case also In *Mar.* 4, the parallel place to the Text, He said unto the Sea, *Peace, and be still*, and 'twas enough; He that could command the winds and Seas by his word, can much more still the troubles and fears of a poor soul coming to him: This hath also in part been confirmed by observing the answers that Christ gave to those who in such difficult cases came to him: *Be thou clean, Go in peace*: and these were presently effected by the word of his mouth: As in the Creation of the world God said, *Let there be*, &c. *and it was so*; Now as to this

this work upon a poor Soul, there's the same mighty power promised, and goes along with his word which he speaks in and by the Gospel, *John* 6 68. *Thou hast the words* saith *Peter, of eternal life*; 'Tis often call'd, *The Word of Life, the Power of God, The arm of the Lord, The rod of his strength*, even such a power as is described, *Psal.* 29. The voice of the Lord upon the waters, The voice of the Lord is powerful and full of Majesty, it breaks the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and shakes the wilderness, &c. so is it able to subdue all the high things, all the Reasonings, ὀχυρώματα and ὑψώματα, the strong holds and heights of our Spirits; It can make the wilderness and the solitary place, the place of singing and of joy: even what the Psalmist concludes in that Psalm mentioned, at *verse* 11. *The Lord will give strength unto his people, The Lord will bless his people with peace*; And this is spoken as a conclusion to all those mighty things that are spoken of the voice of the Lord.

Much might be said for the further explication of this: but being a truth so clear and granted, I shall only briefly aply it.

Use. I might return here to the dead professour, wholy dead, and inform him of his misery by this Truth: That so much vertue and might in the holy Word of God, and he never felt this, shaking or quickening him: And thence that he might come under this conviction, that no work of God with power upon his heart to this day: and so to counsel and encourage the poor, dead, blind, deaf sinners with dilligence to attend upon Christ's voice. Saith

Christ

Christ, Isa. 43. 8. *Bring them to me*; Hast thou a heart like a wilderness? come to him, and it shall blossome as the rose; Hast thou a heart of earth? I will smite it, *Isa.* 11. Nor sins, nor lusts, nor barrenness, nor earthlinesse, nor deafness, nor blindness shall stand before him; Come then, oh come with such an expectation, and thou shalt know the mighty power of his word.

But to the fearing Soul: I need not I hope further encourage thee to come to Christ's Ordinances: Only a word, Hast thou waited on them, but not a comfortable answer yet? Consider well Hast thou come to hear Christ speak? *I will hear what God the Lord will speak*, Hast thou not too much hang'd on the Preacher, upon his lips? This may be a snare: Eye the promise, *Isa.* 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips Peace, Peace, saith the Lord, and I will heal them*, So *Isa*, 55. 10, 11. speaking of the word, *It shall accomplish that which I please*: know, If all the host of glorified Saints, and Angels should join with all the holy Preachers of the Earth, and should encompass thy soul, to speak life or peace unto it, and beseech thee to be comforted, unless Christ speak by them 'twould be all fruitless: Therefore get thy heart into a clear expectation for Christ to speak to thy heart by the Preacher, that is, to distill the dews and consolations of his spirit by it, or all to no purpose. So the Spouse, *Cant.* 2. 8. *The voice of my Beloved.* v. 10. *My Beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up my Love, and fair One, and come away*: So *Cant.* 4. 16. *Awake O North wind, and come thou South, and blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out* which is the Spirit of Christ blowing upon the Ordinances

nances, causing the vertues thereof to flow out: Therefore if thou still continuest a disquieted, fearing, perishing soul, and panteſt after comfort and assurance: Pray thy heart may be raised up to abstract from any power in the voice of man, but wait that the Spirit of Christ may breathe in the voice, and then thou art in a readier posture for the Lord to rebuke the Tempest of fears upon thee. A poor Soul may take further encouragemeet beside the promises, from the blessed experiences of many and many a comfortless creature, who after many tempests, perishing fears, sinkings of Spirit, have at last by waiting publickly and privately for Christ's voice, found the rebuking power of it, and their distempers sweetly allayed; and even a sudden heavenly calm upon them, *There was a great calm*, saith the Text, γαλήνη ἀ γελάω to smile; such a calmness, stilness, such a wonderful serenity that is after a storm, when the heavens and the earth seem, as it were to smile; So Christ smiles upon a soul, having withheld his face and beauty, and causeth a blessed serenity, clearness, quietness, to be upon it; sometimes by a suddain breaking in, sometime by a secret gradual illapsing into a soul, that it becomes comforted it knows not how, ere it was aware: Oh blessed, for ever blessed, the souls that wait and find this. And find it soul thou shalt, if thou art in this posture described; Let the Storm be what it will, the clouds never so dark one ray and beam from Christ shall raise even a heaven in thy spirit, *&c.*

Thus far have I brought a Soul bottomed upon free and faithful promises, to the immediate expectation

pectation of Christ to rebuke the tempests and fears upon it, to succour its perishing Condition: The Lord grant it may settle thee upon the Power, Promise, Purpose, Delight of the Lord Jesus to do it: I will a little speak of the Wonders thou maist expect.

Obs. 6. *The calmed Soul is filled with the Wonders of Christs Power and Love; They marvelled,* saying, *What manner of man is this, that the Winds and the Sea obey him?*

His Name *Isai.* 9. is called *Wonderful,* described to be *Wonderful in Counsel, Excellent in Working,* Isa. 28. *last.* We may view those Meditations of the Saints, when thus in the Admiration of his Wonderful Goodness and Sweetness, *Psalm* 90. 5. *Many, O Lord my God, are thy Wonderful Works which thou hast done, and thy Thoughts which are to us-ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee, If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbred;* So *Psalm* 34. 2, &c. *My Soul shall make her boast in the Lord,* &c. *Oh magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together: I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me out of all my Fears; This poor man cryed unto him, and he saved him out of all his Troubles: Oh taste and see that the Lord is good: Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* Psal. 36. 7. *How excellent is thy loving Kindness, O God?* &c. *Psalm* 116. 7. *Return unto thy Rest, O my Soul,* &c. And what shall I render unto thee? So *Mich.* 7. 18, 19. The Church

Church is brought in ſo admiring Chriſt *Who is God like unto thee* (why?) *that pardoneſt iniquity, and paſſeſt by tranſgreſſions?* &c. *He will turn again* (though he hide his face) *he will have compaſſion upon us*; yea it will break forth, Come, and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul; yea, then Soul, thou ſhalt know, what is the *exceeding greatneſs of his power towards them that believe, according to the working of his mighty power*, Epheſ. 1. 19. Theſe wonders of Chriſt's power and love will be thus enlarged in thy ſoul: Oh the wonders of his power! Who is like unto thee Indeed, Lord, who waſt able at firſt to lay hold of me, and take me as a brand out of the fire? Oh, Am I not ſaved as a brand out of the fire? *Zech.* 3. 2. Thou who waſt able to ſay unto me *Live*, when I was in my blood; dead as a ſtone in my ſins: Thou who waſt able to ſubdue all ſtrong rebellion and obſtinacy of my heart: to turn the violent ſtream of it from earth to heaven; yea, thou waſt able to deal with all mine iniquities and corruption, the leaſt of which had been too ſtrong for me: yea thou waſt able to rebuke all the tempeſtuous aſſaults of Satan, ſuch tempeſts, ſuch a periſhing condition, ſuch fears upon a poor ſoul, to command the waves to be ſtill and they were ſo; Oh who is like unto thee my Almighty glorious Lord? oh the *wonders* of thy free love, who hadſt love and bowels enough to regard ſuch a rebellious wretch, when thus in his blood, ſerving his luſts, and loving pleaſures more than God; When I was daringly and delightfully ſinning againſt thee; Oh infinite love! to pity and ſupport, and ſuccour ſuch a poor, tempeſtuous wretch as

I was, after thou hadst awakened me, when sitter my self being Judge, to have been cast away from thy presence for ever; Oh the Ocean of grace! Oh the wonders of thy love! Oh the unfathomed heights and depths of it! Eternity will but serve to admire and adore thee in it: So sings the Spouse in the Song, *Chap.* 3 6. filled with the loves of Christ, *Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderness like pillars of smoak perfumed with Myrrh and Frankincense, with all Powders of the Merchant*, &c. A little to enlarge this, I will shew what considerations they are that make any work appear *wonderful*, and they will be found in this of the Lord Christs to his People.

1. A repugnancy in nature to the effect wrought forth, this causeth wonder, So is it in the whole work of Christ for us and in us; That which was for us, being but as one continued, rich, glorious mystery *Col.* 1. 26. All of nature against it; As to his work *in* his people; what reluctancy, obstinacy, striving with the holy Spirit, before a proud, hard, rebellious, self exalting heart will yield to bow before the Lord Jesus? Not only listlessness, heartlessness impotency, but a strong enmity and resolute opposition against the work of grace; yea, as to our case in hand, the quieting of the tempest upon a soul, what resistancy to comfort by the carnal part? what putting up of fresh reasonings and doubtings, and will not believe Jesus Christ upon his word, till the spirit of power perswade, command, enables to do so?

2. Such things do beget wonder, which are unexpected, or unhoped for; so is the first appearing and work

work of Christ to and in us; When a Soul securely sits with folded arms in the shadow of death, in the gross darkness that is naturally upon it, the strength of the heart after vanity, when little expectation of such a voice of Christ, as hath been shewed in the first, *Arise*, *Awake*, *Come away*, &c. *Matthew* sitting at the Receipt of Custom little expected that the Lord Christ (whom he never lookt after) should come and speak to him in such a commanding voice and he should presently leave all, so wealthy an income, and follow a persecuted Christ: He would have been like enough to have spit in the face of him, who should have prophesied such a thing to him, as every sinful Wretch is, till the Lord's Voice be heard within him: And so in the matter of comfort, when poor, and languishing, and complaining, a Tempest is up; then, even, before we are aware, above what we durst to expect, comes a Christ, and speaks and calms all.

3. Things formerly *unknown* to us, when they appear, beget wonder: so are the things that Christ works and reveals to us; we are utterly ignorant, and know not what preciousness in Christ, till he open his Heart to us: What refreshings? What Treasures of all goodness and sweetness are in Him.

4. Things that are seldom done, beget wonder: so, comparatively with the World of Souls that are passed by, 'tis but seldom and a rare work for Jesus Christ to lay hold upon Souls; and here and there a Soul, he chooseth forth: And: saith a poor delivered soul, What was I more than another, that the Lord should

should pass by abundance of poor Creatures, who haply never dishonoured God so much as I have done? Oh this Consideration makes Grace appear abundant and admirable! this is a heightning, enlarging Meditation, upon a poor calmed Soul indeed: In a word, the Lord Jesus so conveys himself to his own, that it shall be *marvelous* in their eyes, that they may attribute the first motion of light and life in the Soul from him, the perfecting and continuing of it; That his Children may be kept humble and lowly before him, and ascribe all to him, and depend upon him, that they may have nothing to rejoyce in, but only in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

Use. If a calmed Soul be thus full of the wonders of Christ's Power and Love: First, by this any Soul may know whether the calm that is upon his Spirit, be from Christ or not: If so, then his hand, His hand, his Power, and Love, is admired and extolled in it: Consider, therefore, any Soul, by the way: What are the wondrous things upon thy Spirit? What are the things thou hast deep thoughts of heart about? Canst thou feelingly say, Oh, how wonderful have been the thoughts of Christ towards me? What Wonders hath he wrought for me, and in me? Who is a God pardoning Iniquity like unto thee? *Mic.* 7. 18. That's the temper and voice of a pardoned Soul; so he breaks out into the Admiration of him: A pardoned Soul cannot have such sleight thoughts about it, as the Pretenders to a dead Hope of it have: If it be not so with thee, let me once more counsel thee to go to Christ,

and tell him, what wonders thou heareſt he can do; And plead with him, that there's an Object before him to manifeſt one upon, even by raiſing up ſuch a worm, dead in ſin, as thou art, unto life: Tell him, he ſhall have the Glory of the Miracle; Oh, let him ſay unto thee, Live, and thou ſhalt live in his ſight.

2. If Jeſus Chriſt be able to work forth ſuch wonders upon and for poor Souls, *Videant quàm tutò ſe committant Sancti*, ſaith *Bucer*: See then how ſafely we commit our ſelves to ſuch a Pilot, who can guide and anchor us through all ſtorms and difficulties, can ceaſe our Tempeſts within or without, to make way for ſweeter Sun-ſhines and Calms: And therefore ſhould not the Saints pierce through the thickeſt, darkeſt Tempeſts, and hang upon him, when all appears but in a periſhing way? yea, will not the Lord Jeſus pierce through them all to us, and make our hearts melt with chiding us for our little Faith? Say not, fainting Soul, within thy ſelf, that becauſe 'twill be a wonderful thing for thee to be raiſed up, comforted (whatſoever thy condition be) and therefore it will not be: No, no, ſay, Thou hangeſt upon a Chriſt whoſe Works are all Wonders, and therefore it ſhall be ſo.

And now what will this poor Soul do, that is thus throguh the abundant Grace of Chriſt filled in ſome meaſure with ſuch precious Wonders of Chriſt, when it is bleſſedly calmed by Chriſt's refreſhing voice, (for ſo I will now ſuppoſe that Soul either already, or ſhall be ſo, who hath been,

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or is in this tempestuous perishing condition at Christ's feet) and is, or shall be thus calmed. Will it not to this purpose break forth, Oh welcome ten thousand times sweetest Christ, come, lodge for ever in my Soul (though a mean Habitation) for I cannot let thee go, Ah! will not that Soul study returns of Love and Honour to Jesus Christ? Will it not love him, and love him more abundantly?

Will it not lay it self at his feet to be disposed by him? Will it not smile upon, and embrace reproaches for him? Shall any thing be too dear and precious to part with for Christ? No, It shall not: Shall the pursuit of empty Creatures come in competition with him? Let me ask thee, Soul, in earnest, Wilt thou! Canst thou seek great things for thy self, and let Christ's Honour be sleighted? Go then, and daily treat with Christ to this purpose; Say unto him, Master, Master, What shall I do for thee? For whom shall I live and dye but for thee? Dear Lord, let me some way or other bring Honour to thy tender glorious Name among the living, before I come to thee, and adore thee for ever.

Now, Soul, to point thee out thy particular Duty, that livest in the sense of the Favour and Love of Christ, is more than I designed in this brief Treatise; only I will mind thee with a word or two, and so have done.

Art thou a Soul that hast been by the strong Arm of the Lord carried through some of these experiences, as have been set forth:

1. Consider, that though Jesus Christ hath made such a Calm upon thy spirit, yet know, that there's more than enough in thy heart to distemper all again, though at present kept under: Therefore thou art to look up to the same mighty Hand, to keep all in peace, and in a comfortable frame, as well as at first to create it, and to give in new refreshings, else that which is within thee already, will decay and wither: If Jesus Christ withdraw his hand all is in a mutiny again: Oh, therefore walk humbly and jealously before him, and still be committing all to him, and be drawing fresh supplies from him, or else the sense of this blessed Calm will grow dead in thee.

2. Beware how carnal joy mixeth with thy spiritual, by fetching in too large additions from Creature-comforts, whence will follow lightness and vanity of spirit, and then comes a Cloud ere thou art aware.

3. Be vigilant (as I have before-hinted) and diligent in such ways, wherein thou hast special communion with God; by which thou shalt find greater wonders by the strong Arm of the Lord, than thou hast yet felt, *Song of Sol.* 7. 5. The danger of neglect is spoken before.

4. Do not sit down in a slender stock of Grace, and the Knowledge of Christ: There are depths in Christ, and depths in thy own heart to be searcht, which haply do yet lie close undiscerned upon thy spirit.

5. Be in the frequent remembrance of how much is forgiven, and this will raise up thy love and zeal, and quicken it when it begins to slack, *Luk.* 7.

6. Be-

6. Beware of venturing on the least sin, do not say, 'Tis a little one, and thou maist venture, 'twill like an *Achan* disturb all. The fear and hatred of the least evil, maintains a solid, setled communion with God: Vain and carnal Company (as hath been shewed) dulls a mans spirit, as also a frothy carriage, and liberal jesting.

7. Much might be said, but in a word Know, 'Tis the hardest work of a Believer to manage Comfort and Assurance: The heart, the carnal part of it, is apt to be lifted up in it: Indeed, a comforted soul at the first coming of it, is apt to conceive, that such a temper can never be lost: But this is a Vanity.

Lastly, Get the aims of thy heart more raised after Purity and Likeness of God, than joy and comfort: To be like God, and see him as he is, 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. is the highest aim of a gracious Soul. Which the Blessed, Holy God give thee and me to aspire after, till we shall be fully with him, and so see him as he is to all Eternity, *Amen.*

Discoveries of a sincere close with Christ, and obedience to Him.

MAke a narrow search after *Heart sincerity*: 1. Many a poor Creature hath been filled with trouble and terrour of Soul, the guilt of sin lying upon an awakened Conscience, and after gets the Conscience *calmed* either by a meer forsaking the sin that troubled, and reforming, and taking up to new Duties; or by getting in some notions of Free-grace, and the righteousness of Christ; and yet the heart doth not make a *sincere* close with Jesus Christ, and so the wound is but skinned o're, and no solid *peace* in the Conscience: Though this will be discovered more at large in the opening the *New-Creature*, in the Treatise annexed; yet as it refers to the preserving of a *setled peace* in the Soul, I shall here lay down plain Evidences of *Gospel sincerity*, to satisfie that scruple of a poor doubting Soul, which hath come a poor trembling Soul to Jesus Christ for al; but yet fears he doth not do it sincerely, and that he is yet but a Hypocrite.

First,

First, let such a poor Soul know, that such a *jealousie* of its own *sincerity*, accompanied with a serious enquiry after it, and would not *hide any thing from God*, Joh 3.1.33: but come to the *light* of the Word and be thoroughly *discovered*; this is a hopeful sign that there is some *sincerity* in that Soul. When the Apostle so earnestly praies for his dear *Philipians*, Phil. 1.9,10, *that they might be sincere.* The Word there, in the Original εἰλικρινεῖς, that is translated *sincere*, signifies a thing *held out to the light of the Sun*; implying, that sincere Souls are willing to be held out to the *light* of the Word and Spirit to be tried and searcht, Whether their Souls are *sincere* with *God* or not.

But now as to a sincere *close* with Jesus Christ, and a sincere way of *obedience* towards him.

First, supposing the Soul hath come a poor self-emptied sinner to Jesus Christ, as knockt off from all its holds, convinced of the pollution, and insufficiency of all its Righteousness to stand before God, and so cries out, If I have not righteousness in another, in Jesus Christ, I *perish*, and so casts it self upon it, reacheth after it, closeth with it, presseth after an interest in it, and would fetch in its peace and reconciliation with God by it: Now if this be a sincere close with Christ;

1. Then the Soul doth close with Christ by a *conjugal Acceptance* of Jesus Christ, and a *conjugal resignment* of its self to him, and that in an everlasting *Covenant* and *Union* with him, which doth thus arise.

Jesus Christ *makes known* himself to that poor Soul, as he did to the Woman of *Canaan*, Joh. 4. 10. *Jesus answered, and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.*

Thus the Lord Jesus Christ, when he takes a Soul to himself, he shews *himself, who he is*, the Eternal Son of God, lovely in all Perfections, full of all Grace, *We behold him as the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace*, Joh. 1. 14. Such a sight hath a poor Soul of Jesus Christ; ah! *full, full of all Grace*, and so is *taken*, infinitely, for ever, *taken* with him.

2. He shews the Soul what he is *able to give, living water* Live unto the Soul, what ever may make the Soul blessed here, and for ever, what ever it can stand in need of, answers all its largest desires, fills up the Soul, and satiates it with Goodness and Love. Thus Jesus Christ *proposeth* himself to a poor soul.

3. He *treats* with a Soul about the Souls *Acceptance of him*, expresseth his infinite *Good Will* to bestow himself, and all his Riches of Grace and Glory upon the Soul, makes many a *Free Offer* to a poor Soul of himself; yea, perswades the Soul by many *invincible* pressing Arguments, to come to him, to accept of him as a Husband to the Soul, tells the poor sinner, that none can do for him as he can do; that he will be in the room of Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, all Friends, Relations, Worldly Enjoyments, and make up the want of all, by his gracious presence, and a supply of whatever may be a Blessing to a poor soul.

4. He

4. He at last *draws* the Soul to himself, *Joh.* 6. 44. Jesus Christ puts forth his hand, and takes hold of the poor Soul; Come, saith Jesus Christ, to the poor Soul (that stands off, and the Heart saith, shall I, or shall I not, and hath many draw-backs,) Come to me come to me, Thou shalt not choose but *accept* of me, I *will* not, *must* not be denied; I am worthy of thee; I have let go my heart-blood for thee, none deserves thee as I do: Nay then, saith the poor soul, I *must*, I do (thou blessed Son of God, thou lovely Saviour) come unto thee; I *accept of thee* as the most glorious gift of the Father: I take thy blessed glorious self; and the terms thou dost pro-pose, are blessed, and my Soul closeth with them.

1. Saith the Soul, I do deliberately, seriously with my whole Heart *renounce* all other Lovers: Though my Soul hath plaid the Harlot with many others, yet now let my Heart be cut off, divorced from them all,

2. I *take* (my Soul, all that is within me, doth take) this one blessed Lord Jesus, and none but him, resolving, *in the want of all things*, to be abundantly contented and satisfied with him, never to repine at my choice, never to turn away from it: Here's *Consent* in this Conjugal Acceptation of Jesus Christ, free, full, honest, entire consent, nor to have a *Reserve* in the Heart retained, after the best search it can make.

3. Upon this the Soul cries, *Draw me*, and I will run after thee, *Song of Sol.* 1. 4. Unite me to thy Self, by thy Spirit; let's be for ever *One*, and let this Covenant be for ever; and so comes to a *Conjugal Resignment*

Resignment of its self to the Lord Jesus, as his Spouse, for ever.

In this *Resignment* of the Soul to Jesus Christ, the Soul is enabled, in some measure, to put forth these Acts:

1. *To love him above* All: *The Upright love thee*, Song of Sol. 1. 4. And, *Here I will give thee my loves*, Chap. 7. 12. To have the Heart engaged to him; That when any created good shall come in competition with him, to deny it, and let go *All* for him, *Luke* 14. 33. Now 'tis a *dead* Word, and a *living* Christ; and let the World go for ever, and let Christ come.

2. To be *subject* to him, in a *Spouse-like* way, *Eph.* 5. 23. To be subject to all his Holy Commands, and that out of love to him, *Joh.* 15. 10. *If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my love.* Thus would the Soul carry it in a *sweet way* of Obedience to him, and delight to do his Will, and the Will of the Father.

An Hypocritical close with Christ, is not accompanied with any *delightful Obedience*; so saith *Job* of a Hypocrite, *Chap.* 27. 10. *Will he delight himself in the Almighty?* A Soul, in a sincere Resignment, saith of the Yoke of Christ, Oh, 'tis *easie*, and *sweet*, and *blessed*, though the carnal part would draw back; and his Commandments are not *grievous* but *precious*.

3. The Soul, in this *sincere Resignment* to Christ, would be made like to him; That Soul would have

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a heart, as like the heart of Christ, as possibly it may be, it would have such a *gracious Disposition*, as her sweet and deareſt Bridegroom hath: Oh! saith the poor Soul, that I could be holy, and meek, and humble, and tender, and patient, as Jesus Christ was, that I could behave my self in the Word, as Jesus Christ did; That I might be known to be his, by his image upon me, by my Christ-like carriage among men; That I could despise the World, as Jesus Christ did, and be contented to be despised in the World, as he was.

4. The Soul would please Christ, study his pleasure, and not *grieve* him, 1 *Thess.* 4. 1. The Soul would be more *lovely* in his sight, that he might rejoyce over her. And when the Blessed Lord is displeased, the poor Soul mourns, and creeps to him again, and beseecheth him to over-look any disobedience and unkindness, and to receive her into favour again. If the Soul hath carryed it *sleightly* towards him, *neglected* him a little, Oh the Soul *returns* to him, and will not from him, till he will signifie his *Pity*, and *Pardon*, and *Acceptance*, and speak *kindly* to her. If he hath contented himself to live without all Christ's Ordinances, and communion with his People, that Soul shall be deeply humbled, and take any pains to enjoy them.

5. Upon this, the Soul would be *constant* to him, and that in every Condition: If the Heart start aside, and be like to be ensnared by other Lovers, it hath a word from Christ, and it returns, and

takes

takes hold of him again, and of his *Covenant*, which it first made with him, and minds her Blessed Lord, that his Promise was *everlasting kindness*, Jer. 31. 2 and that he would *never turn away* his loving kindness from her, *Jer.* 32. 40. And that he made that Covenant with his *whole heart*, and *whole soul* ver. 41. And therefore, that he will not reject her; though through weakness temptation, unwariness the poor soul hath been *unconstant* to him; yea, that he promised, that upon *return* he would accept of her, *Jer.* 3. 1. specially when the sense of this unkindness, on her part, *breaks the heart*, and hath an *indignation* against it self, and would have a Heart never to depart from him.

6. The Soul, upon its conjugal engagement with him, would live in his *Fellowship*, 1 Joh. 1. 3. It would have real Fellowship with him, in the *loveliness* of his person, to be more and more endeared to him in his blood to cleanse her, his righteousness to cover her, his grace to beautifie her, his love to refresh her. Oh, saith the Soul, When it hath had sweet and kindly communion with him, oh that I might dwell here! Oh how sweet is his love! Oh when shall I see him, so, that I may never look off him! When shall I so enjoy him, that my Heart may never decline from him?

And thus briefly, have you stated a sincere close with the Lord Jesus, in a *conjugal accepting* of him, and *resignment* to him, which I shall not further apply, but leave a poor soul jealous of its self to see how the Heart can (at least in *true desires*, and actings though

though not in such strong affections, as it would desire, go along with these things.

If thou art jealous, that thou hast not thus *accepted* of Christ, upon his revealing himself, and drawing thee to him, and thy *resignment* of thy self to be his for ever; Then go to him (as he calleth thee, and hath often done so, to come to him, and accept of him, and all Blessedness with him) and tell him, That thou art now come to profess thy most serious, free and hearty acceptance of him: Say Now Lord Jesus, draw me; now I accept of thy lovely person, of thy blood, grace, life, rule, government, over me: Oh come, come, to my poor Soul, and be *mine* for ever; I *renounce* all for thee, I wholly *resign* my self to thee, to love thee, obey thee, please thee, to be made like unto thee, to have fellowship with thee, and that in an *Everlasting Covenant*, and let to be recorded in Heaven that I do so: Though I am unfit for thy choice, yet it so pleaseth thee to invite me to accept of thy free offer: And though I am uncomely, thou canst wash me in thy blood, and put thy righteousness over me: thou canst *spread thy skirt over me*, Ezek. 16. Thou canst anoint me with Oil, and beautifie me with new Ornaments of Grace, and I shall be lovely in thy sight. Yea, thou poor, trembling, doubting, jealous Soul: do this day by day, and the blessed Lord and Bridegroom will speak *good words* and *comfortable words* to thee; he will say, I am thy *Husband*, and thou art become *mine*, I will succour thee, and comfort thee; I will relieve thy heart in all thy pressures, and bear the in mine Arms: in all thy conflicts when thou art weak, mine

Hand

Hand ſhall be under thee: when ſinking, I'le take hold on thee: when in darkneſs, I will come unto thee; And then ſhalt thou riſe up, and ſay and rejoice, Now, now, I *am my Beloveds, and my Beloved is mine*, Song of Sol. 2.

I am; 'tis ſo: He *is* mine; Ah *mine*; a bleſſed, a gracious, a glorious Chriſt; and he is *mine*, what want I more? 'Tis enough, Lord, enough, now I know thou art *mine*: Oh! let me *pleaſe* thee, love thee, be *like* to thee, be for ever *with* thee.

Though what hath been ſaid, may be enough, (if the Lord ſpeak it) to ſatisfie a poor ſoul, as to the *ſincerity* of its *obedience*, as well as its *cloſe* with Chriſt; yet I will mention ſome further Diſcoveries of a ſincere Soul, in its walking before God.

1. A ſincere Soul is carried on in its obedience from the love it hath to the infinite Bleſſed God. The Soul reſpects the Soveraignty of God in his Commands and ſaith of them, they are all holy, and bleſſed; but the Soul, alſo, from a ſight it hath, not only of the love of God revealed in the Lord Jeſus, *ſhed abroad in the Heart by the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 5. 5. but of the glorious amiableneſs of God in Chriſt, hath a gracious delight to obey him, ſo far as it is *regenerate*. So that, though the ſincere Soul hath a reſpect to the reward and puniſhment, and may ſo, in the way of obedience; yet, when Grace doth act, and the Lord appears to the Soul, it would obey him out of *love* to him, and the *holineſs* and *goodneſs*, that are in all his Commands.

2. Sin-

2. Sincerity rather desires to be religious and holy than appear to be so; It loves the reality of it, more than the repute of it. A *Hypocrite* is described in the Gospel, *as loving the praise of men more than the praise of God.* 'Tis true, a sincere soul will find such mixtures and stirrings in the heart, as to be glancing at the praise of men; but the Soul humbled under it presseth after the subduing of it, and hath an indignation against it.

3. From thence may arise another discovery of *Sincerity*; which is, a sincere person hath a discovery and feeling of a cursed Root of *Selfishness* and *Hypocrisie*, and presseth God for the burning of it up in the heart, by the fire of the Holy Ghost. This doth not indeed, so much appear to poor Souls, who are not called to doing much before others; yet they find in their Holy Discourses of the things of God, with others in their walkings, that they cannot have such a pure respect to the glory of God, and good of others as they should have, and are not troubled under it; and so far as a Child of God secretly cockers this evil in the heart, and is willing to overlook it so far doth the Hypocrisie prevail, (as this is apt in younger persons and converts) and yet some sincerity acting towards God.

4. Sincerity, more looketh after the *Spirituality* of a Duty, than the meer doing of it. It doth not only care to perform the Duty, but would be *humble, holy, upright, spiritual,* and *enjoy communion with God* in the Duty, *Phil.* 3. 3.

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It looks more at the *holiness* of a duty, than the *bulk* of it: Take a Hypocrite, a Papist, or a carnal Protestant, and if they constantly perform *much* duty, and the conscience be quieted 'tis enough, but little looks at the frame of the heart in duty, *Mat.* 15. 8. 'Tis given as the character of a hypocrite; the heart is still the same in duty, no complaints of deadness, straitness, &c. but 'tis otherwise with a poor sincere Soul.

5. Sincerity is taken up mostly with *weighty* things, more than with scruples and opinions of lesser concernments; It is taken up more with the weighty things of humiliation, holiness, fellowship with God, the ways of its own heart, than to have its zeal run forth about some external things. I gather this from our Lords discovery of the hypocrisie in that age, *Matth.* 23. 23. and *Luke* 11. 42. *Ye tithe mint and cummin, and neglect the weighty things of the Law, judgment and mercy; ye pass over Judgment and the love of God,* &c. Where a Soul walks loosly from God, and puts forth a great deal of zeal for some external thing, or loves his opinion in a loose person more than holiness in another, it is a ground of great suspicion to that Soul, not that hereby I justifie the imputation of many that charge all exactness about the worship of God, as to the holiness of it, to be Pharisaism; but I speak of *mostness*, &c.

6. Sincerity, so far as it prevails, is most in *judging if it* self, and is humbled when the heart runs forth in judging of others; I gather this also from Christs own character, *Matth.* 7. 1, 2, 3 *Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy Brothers eye, but considerest*

not

not the beam that is in thine own eye; let Professours in every way look to this; The *Pharisees* were judging of *John* and Christ himself, because they pleased not them in every thing, and their honor was eclipsed by them: so far as hypocrisie prevails in a Child of God, 'tis making *great* others failings, and *lessning* its own, whose main business is to be judging of others, and little at home, still questioning others sincerity, but never their own:

7. Sincerity is taken up about *secret* sins, and the avoiding and mortifying of them, as well as *open*: This also our Lord doth intimate, *Luke* 11. 39. *ye make clean the out side of the platter, but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness: outwardly ye appear beautifull, but within are full of dead mens bones and of all uncleanness*, Matth. 23: Hence, a hypocrite chiefly respects his outside, but a sincere Soul hath chief respect to a good *inward man*; Rom. 7. 22. His main care lies about *heart-purity*, Math. 5.

8. A sincere soul is mostly careful of *secret duties*. *When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, &c. But when thou prayest enter into thy Closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father that seeth in secret, &c*: A hypocrite slights secret duty, or if he perform it, 'tis as described in the fourth head, (I confess many a hypocrite, many a formal Creature performs much formal praying in secret) but he is not constant in a delightful way of Communion with God, in deep abasement, heart-purging, waiting to see the face of God, to have *quickenings* and *meltings* of heart, as a sincere soul doth. Ma-

ny a hypocrite that can pray out of a form, is *ſometimes* in ſecret duty, but is off and on in it, hath not a ſweet delight in it.

9. A ſincere Soul would be ſo in *every thing*, in *every* duty, in duties to God, and towards others in *Callings*, in carriage towards *Relations* &c. *Pſal.* 119. 128. *I eſteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right.* &c. Sincerity doth not pick and chooſe, but delivers up it ſelf to the whole will of God; not, a Saint abroad and a Devil at home.

10. And thence it follows, that a ſincere ſoul would be as *in the ſight of God*, when no eye is upon him: and to tears before him; 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. 17. *But as of ſincerity but as of God in the ſight of God ſpeak we in Chriſt.* A hypocrite only or moſtly reſpects the eye of others: but a ſincere ſoul, as hath been ſhew'd, abhors the heart when it hath ſuch reflexions: *It would pleaſe God rather than men*, Gal 1.10 *If I yet pleaſe men, I ſhould not be the Servant of Chriſt.*

11. Sincerity *hates ſin* in *others*, and this ſhews it hates *ſin* as *ſin*: *Pſal.* 139. 21. *I hate them, that hate Thee*, &c: that is, as *they are Gods enemies*, &c. ſincerity is troubled that it can no more lay to heart the ſins of the times, the falls of others, and no more mourn for them.

12. Sincerity (eſpecially as it grows in the Soul) is

is much in *self abhorrency*, as it sees more and more of God, which ariseth from the very nature of it: *which is chiefly taken up in designing God in all*: Now till a poor Creature be out of love with himself, abhors himself, is emptied of himself, nothing in himself, he will never design God; so that *the choisest sincerity is laid in the deepest humiliation*; Nothing more opposed to sincerity than *self conceit*, *self pleasing*, *self-estimation*, *self exaltation*: Luke 18. and Mat. 23. 'tis a note of *a hypocrite* to *exalt himself*: The more sincerity, the severer edg and watch against this cursed heart self-Idolatry.

13. If Jesus Christ call for all the poor sincere Soul hath, he would *deny* himself in all, and give all to him: having laid all at his feet, in his first close he continueth to do so. If the *honour* of Jesus Christ and his *interest* stand in competition, that Soul will say, Lord tear my interest from my heart, rather than Thy name, and honour, or service should suffer by it: And if Jesus Christ call him to any difficulties, that Soul would *follow* him, (though in a day of great Apostacy) *whersoever he goeth*; be his paths in his providences in carrying on his cause, never so difficult, he would be faithful to him, *without guile*.

14. A sincere soul goes out of its *self* to Jesus Christ for strength to do all; and when it hath done all, looks upon Jesus Christ and his righteousness (as if it had done nothing) *better* than all, *Phil.* 3. 8.

Lastly: Sincerity loves the Lord Jesus Christ *for himself*, and not only for the good things it hath by him; this is *upright Love*: Song of *Sol.* 1. 4. the soul is most taken with Jesus Christ himself, for the *excellency*, *beauty*, *loveliness*, *sweetness* that is in him, and thence longs after him, loves to see him, cannot endure his absence, will not be at rest till it be for ever with him, and so can cry, Ah come, come, Lord Jesus come quickly: *Amen.*

More might have been added, and these brief hints might have been enlarged: but I doubt not but out of these, as taken together, a poor *Soul* may pick out comfortable evidences of sincerity: I know what is apt to be objected, Oh saith many a poor single heart, Oh I fear I do not obey God out of *Love* to him, I am not so *real* in all I do, I am exceeding *selfish*, I am not so *spiritual* in duties as I should be, I am not so careful about *secret* sins, I have many close lusts, that no body sees, I do not so hate sin in others, *&c.* and so in all. I answer, If a poor soul can be at the feet of God, *mourning in its complaint*, because it can love God no more, and is not so spiritual, and trembles at heart hypocrisie, and so walks with a humble jealousie over it self, then I say, though that poor soul cannot find all these tidings of soul so distinct, and vigorous as it would do, and would have, and follow God for them; and I do pronounce that soul sincere and blessed.

So soul, wouldst thou love God ten thousand times more? and is not thy want of more love thy bur-

burden? would'st thou not be found real, however despised of men; Canst thou content thy self with meer Duties, and not have thy heart in them? No thou canst not; I speak to a soul under these Complaints.

Darest thou allow thy self in any secret sin or lust? and dost thou not press after *Universal* Mortification? Yea sure, thou wilt say, oh that every lust within were crucified: that's my want: And say, Is not thy delight and comfort (though not so great as thou would have it) to pour thy heart in secret with God, and canst not be satisfied without a glimpse of God, and heart-quickning and melting in some measure. Yea, thou will say, 'Tis the Comfort of my life; Would'st thou not be sincere in every thing, and do all as in God's sight? And wouldst thou not *abhor* thy self for thy former Pollution before converted, and for the woful frame of thy nature, and sinful mixtures of thy Duties, and *shortness* in all thou shouldst do: And dost not see so much sinfulness in thy nature, and in thy best Duties, that thou darest not stand to one of them; but, to the Righteousness of Christ thou wilt stand and fall only. Ah thou wilt say, wretched Creature, If I had not a better righteousness, than that of my duties or sincerity to fly unto!

And is not Christ *Lovely*, for himself? and dost not long to see him more lovely and precious? Is he not *fairer than All?* Art not troubled, if he hide himself but a little? Yea my life is in Communion with him: All my fear is, I do not see him

him enough, and *Love* him enough, and my soul in his Ordinances waiteth for him.

Go, go, Poor soul, and refuse not to be comforted, let not the Lord lose his Glory in what he hath done for thee: Bless him for what thou hast, whilest thou mournest 'tis no more. Surely, If this be thy temper, and thy soul can thus answer, know, God doth love thy soul, or it had never been thus with thee: and therefore have not hard thoughts of him any more. Hold fast thy integrity, and let not Satan, by accusing thee for a Hypocrite, cause thee to question his favour any more.

FINIS.

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